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Ping-pong politics rematch



Chinese former ping-pong world champion Qi Baoxiang (L) plays against Judy Hoarfrost (R), a member of the US ping-pong team that visited in 1971 for ping-pong diplomacy. The Friendship Ping-Pong Match at the State General Administration of Sport Wednesday marked the 30th anniversary of China-US diplomatic relations. US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte attended.

Xinhua photo

See more of Negroponte's visit on Page 9.

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YOUR ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION !

Web site operators apologize for porn links

By Han Manman

Three of the most popular search engines including Google and Baidu apologized Wednesday for being slow to remove links to pornographic material following a government crackdown this week.

The Ministry of Public Security is spearheaded on Monday a month-long campaign to purge the Internet of Web sites accused of "violating public morality and harming the physical and mental health of young people."

Officials publicly criticized 19 Internet Web sites and operators, including Google, Baidu and SINA Corp for disregarding warnings about carrying the offending content.

"The government will continue to expose, punish or shut down those infamous Web sites that refuse to correct their wrongdoings," Cai Mingzhao, deputy director of the State Council Information Office, said in a teleconference Monday.

"Immediate action is needed

to purify the Internet," Cai said.

After declining a comment for two days, Baidu Wednesday issued a public apology. "We feel guilty and already took action to purge the relevant porn links. We apologize to Internet users for any negative effect we have had on society," it said.

Google's China office said it would "work hard" with Internet users and society to build an Internet culture with a positive impact.

Chen Luming, vice president of the major portal Sohu, said the move was meant to raise awareness of the need to purify the Internet and stop making portals the scapegoats for troublemakers who intentionally upload obscene content.

"We call on all Internet communities, media and netizens not to publicize nude photos, videos and literature ... and not to spread pornography ... and show respect for people's privacy by not posting their personal information," read a bulletin on its Web site.

However, to purge itself of pornographic content remains a problem for the Web. According to Sohu, the large number of Internet surfers makes it difficult to filter information with limited technicians.

"We are open to user reports and any warnings and would take immediate actions to delete porn, but it's more important to stop its production," Cui Jin, a Google public relations manager in Beijing, said.

She said the definitions of "pornography" and "vulgar" materials were too vague for the Web site to decide which pictures and videos would fall into each category.

Cai Mingzhao said "vulgar" content is any which contains information that advocates bloodshed, violence, murder, slander or libel. Inexplicit or erotic sexual images, publications, animations, comics and videos could also be considered vulgar.

China has the world's largest population of Internet users with more than 253 million online as



Many Web sites say large numbers of Internet surfers and limited technicians makes it difficult to keep up on filtering. IC Photo

of June 2008. Young people comprise the bulk of that userbase.

British students busted for 'illegal map-making'

By Han Manman

Three British geology students have been fined for "illegal map-making activities," the *Xinjiang Daily* reported Monday.

The three students from Imperial College London were researching and mapping fault lines in the region. The daily reported the students obtained visas with permission from China's Earthquake Administration in Beijing for geological research, but noted they were not cleared with other government departments.

The students, who were not named, were fined 20,000 yuan but received no further punishment. The data they gathered would have been valuable in analyzing mineral and topographic features of the areas, Kang Boping, vice director of the Xinjiang Surveying and Mapping Bureau, said.

Kang said authorities confiscated their equipment in October after they were found collecting data in several areas, including Kashgar, the ancient Silk Road trading post where some of last year's unrest took place.

Kang said they had collected "illegal data" from 6,000 points that was valuable for mineral prospecting and topographical research.

"The number of foreigners surveying and mapping China is on the rise, and many illegal field projects have threatened our national security," said Jiang Chunliang, researcher of Academy of Military Sciences, adding such research has military application.

Jiang said Xinjiang is China's nuclear test base, and many international intelligence agents have an interest in mapping Xinjiang.

"It is not the first time China found a foreigner making illegal maps," Jiang said. He said three Korean and seven Japanese nationals were fined for illegal mapping in 2007.

China has placed stricter controls on foreign data-collecting activities such as map-making across the country on security fears.

According to regulations established in 2006, foreign researchers require government permission to engage in surveying and must accept official supervision. The regulations said foreigners who illegally survey, gather and publish geographical information on the country will be severely punished.

E-waste dismantling factory failing



The e-garbage town Bajiacun lacks environmentally safe equipment to dismantle electronic waste.

Photo by Yu Rao

By Annie Wei

Beijing's first electronics waste dismantling factory, which went into service last year, has two big problems: absence of government support and a citizenry who would rather sell their e-waste to neighborhood collectors.

The factory was built in Hanjiachuan, Haidian District, beside Zhongguancun, the internationally famous electronics market. It has five of the most advanced dismantling machines in the country and can process 12,000 tons of e-waste every year with only 12 workers. It was supposed to recycle materials like used printers, computers and

FAX machines from surrounding government offices, organizations, schools and enterprises.

However, the factory can barely survive since it has not received any government subsidy and legislation that would protect the environment from e-waste remains unwritten. The country has not issued any guidelines on how electronic waste is to be processed, and the factory pays a lower price for waste than do the small vendors.

"Locals are used to selling their refrigerators or TV sets to random vendors who park outside their buildings. They don't even know about our factory," the

factory manager said.

The city's "electronic garbage town" – Bajiacun on North Fifth Ring Road – takes in and puts out some 400,000 to 500,000 tons of e-waste every day, the *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

Half the residents of the garbage town make their livings by recycling e-waste. However, they do it without the sealed factories and special equipment which can prevent the spread of dangerous materials into the air.

Feng, a vendor in the e-garbage town said the processed e-waste would be sold in the South.

According to the Beijing Municipal Environment Pro-

tection Administration, the capital yields 3 million sets of waste electrical appliances, totaling more than 100,000 tons each year. Another 90 percent of the waste appliances are gathered by individual collectors and routed to dumps in other provinces. The trash has caused incredible pollution, which the new facility hoped to diminish.

Zhang Xuedong, a deputy to the National People's Congress (NPC), or China's parliament, said that electronic waste pollution has come to prominence as the life cycles of electronic products grow shorter and shorter.

Aspiring director seeks netizen funding

By Venus Lee

An aspiring young director posted on an Internet forum at the beginning of December that he was looking for 100,000 yuan in investment to produce his comedy movie, Mr. Fun.

Hu Shufen, the director, issued 1,000 shares in his movie, each sold at 100 yuan. As of Monday all the shares were sold. It was the first time a director raised funds over the Internet to produce a movie.

Hu was frustrated by the lack of funds for several years. No company would invest in his movie because he was an unknown name, and conventional moviemaking theory ties much of a film's success to the name of its director. And so he turned to the Internet.

Many Internet movies are filmed using

home camcorder equipment, which is why their quality is often poor, Hu said. "I want to change this. I want to make a professional movie – not these grassroots films," Hu said.

The medium is destined for the mainstream as it is low-budget but competitive, he said. "It will give more people a chance to make movies while the economy remains mangled," he said. To his way of thinking, the economic crisis should bring a boom to the film industry. "Movies relieve stress and encourage people during hard times. We can't pass up this opportunity to make good Internet movies," Hu said.

The development of technology has moved moviemaking from the hands of big companies to the masses, Hu said, pointing to how regular people can act in or

direct their own films.

"Although Internet movies cannot be screened in the theater, they still appeal to netizen viewing habits. More importantly, the movies will keep viewer attention on the Internet, which increases the number of viewers and creates a real possibility of profit," he said.

However, his fund raising has been called illegal by Zhu Daqi, a professor at Renmin University's law school. "Any legal entity that raises funds from the public must be ratified by the proper authorities."

Yin Jianping, a lawyer from T&D Associates Law office, said the case falls into a legal grey area. "At any rate, Hu's move is conducive to the development of Chinese movies under the current economic strain," he said.

Content providers to sue Tudou for infringement

By Wang Yu

Video portal Joy.cn announced it is collecting evidence to sue Toudou.com, one of the biggest video-sharing Web sites, for copyright infringement.

Joy.cn is building an anti-piracy alliance of 80 copyright owners, including film distributor PolyBona Film, record label Orange Sky Entertainment, Emperor Entertainment Group and In Look Media. "It is just the beginning of the investigation," Zhang He, CEO of Joy.cn, said. "We own the copyrights to much of Tudou.com's content, especially the TV dramas."

"The Luckiest Man, one of our movies last year, was broadcasted on Tudou.com without asking for our permission. It harmed the box office sales and disturbed our marketing plans," said Lü Jianmin of Chunqiu, an alliance member.

The next day, Tudou held a press conference and indicated that the issue is just a media hype made by Joy. The company announced it has cooperated with a lot of the members of the anti-piracy alliance. A new copyright management system will go online after Spring Festival. With it, content providers can check whether their products are pirated or not.

"The alliance was not formed just for this issue. We hope it will continue as an organization protecting copyrights from Internet piracy," Zhang said.

In May last year, Joy charged Tudou with unauthorized use of its videos. The case was resolved later in November with an out-of-court settlement. Tudou paid compensation for the economic losses caused by its copyright infringement.

The Heidou (Black Bean) HD channel began to broadcast authorized content last September by Tudou, which was referred to as the company's attempt to solve copyright troubles.

"According to Chinese law, service providers like Tudou are guilty only if they refuse to erase unauthorized contents within a period of time after receiving warnings of copyright infringement," You Yunting, lawyer at Shanghai Join Way law firm, said. "There's an unwritten rule in the business circle. Video-sharing Web sites upload the latest unauthorized content by masquerading as their own users to avoid law suits," Zhang said.

"In such cases, the compensation money is determined by the economic loss of the accuser and the defendant's profit from related content. But usually it is hard to figure out a specific number, so the court makes a final judgment with an upper limit of 500,000 yuan," You said.

Besides homemade TV dramas, foreign series such as *Prison Break* and *Heroes* are also found on Chinese video-sharing Web sites, even on Joy.cn. Broadcast permission is difficult to obtain from Western TV stations. "All we can do is to erase such content uploaded by users as soon as possible," Zhang said.

YouTube remains as unprofitable as its Chinese counterparts. The dilemma continues to be whether to violate copyright or suffer a vacuum of content.

Some video-sharing Web sites are making the transition to news video portals, like Ku6.com. Joy.cn has a sub channel called Jiuke which broadcasts User Generated Content and helps independent creators to make original videos.

"But it only contributes to 10 percent of our page views. Our mainstream business is still movies and TV dramas," Zhang said.

School gives students chance to beat the teacher



By Jin Zhu

Licheng No 1 Middle School in Jinan, Shandong Province, has a new "venting room" for its students. Inside are punching bags bearing the likenesses of school administration and other officials. Students are given free use of the room to vent their feelings of anger, resentment, frustration and depression stemming from their daily studies.

"Young students face great pressures from study. It can easily

build up to affect their mental health if they are not given an outlet," Meng Fanxiang, vice principal of the school, said. As for placing photos on the punching bags, he said he believes the students' mental health is more important than his image. "I don't mind if students express their frustration with my actions this way," Meng, who is in charge of student management, said.

Human flesh search engine sets its own limits

By Annie Wei

Netizens released a first edition draft of the "Rules and Conventions of the Human Flesh Search Engine" last week on popular Web sites Easenet, Tianya, Mop and Douban, trying to bolster the phenomenon's reputation.

The citizen-driven, online forum-based manhunt for social undesirables has found itself the target of much criticism. Some consider it a weapon of grassroots justice and a vehicle to strip corrupt government officials of their jobs. Users have exposed leaders with luxury-brand watches, imported cigarettes and lavish cars threatening normal citizens.

However, others consider it a cyber lynch

mob that publicly vilifies and humiliates normal people. One example is the case of Jiang Yan, who blogged about her cheating husband before committing suicide by jumping out a window. Harassment by angry netizens led to the husband and his lover's employers to fire them.

The new convention has eight articles. In article 3 and 4, it declares "the human flesh search engine should not violate a target's privacy," though article 5 waives these rules in cases of corruption or embezzlement.

The convention was first posted by a user "Yule," who said the draft was composed after hearing public opinion. Most netizens agreed with the convention, though ques-

tions users' ability to limit themselves without the oversight of law enforcement.

Ming Yue, manager of Mop.com, the origin of many big "human flesh search engine" stories, said that to solve the invasion of privacy problem, Mop formed a union for its online bounty hunters who follow the new rules.

"We have several hundred people we have screened who will participate in the Web site's management," Ming said.

A lack of related laws and regulations leaves most human flesh search engines to be regulated by the rules of the Internet, Ming said. The most site maintainers can do is delete posts which violate others' privacy.

Escaping the job-hunt

By Jin Zhu

For this country of 1.3 billion, college education used to be the guarantor of a good income, decent workplace and entrance to a big city.

However, everything has changed. Faced with a worsening employment situation, many graduating students are escaping the job hunt and looking for other ways to change their future.

"My parents borrowed 240,000 yuan to send me to the University of Sydney after graduation for continued study. Should I go along with their decision?"

Recently, this posting has been circulating on popular Internet forums. The writer, who used the pen name qiushuixiaoyu, said that when she failed to get a job offer, her parents did not hesitate to take out the large loan. She said she felt guilty for being a heavy economic burden on her family, which she described as being of simple means.

As the current global financial crisis continues to affect the country's economy, graduates are seeing a tougher employment situation than ever this year.

However, some students are looking beyond the infamously packed job fairs for post-graduation options.

Abandoning hope

For Wang Weiyi, 25, an international finance major at Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, this New Year's Day was the most stressful holiday ever.

As a graduating student, Wang hoped to land a job by June. However, as of the start of the year, his 30 applications resulted in only five interviews: none of which ended with a job offer.

"Based on the experiences of graduates from previous years, the best time for someone with my major to find a job was by the end of December. During the same period last year, most graduates like me had job offers from several well-known international or domestic financial companies," Wang said.

"The situation is obviously very bad this year. Many companies' demands for employees have dropped significantly, and their need for new recruits is even lower," he said.

Wang said students studying finance, real estate, foreign trade and manufacturing are facing the hardest times.

At present, the employment situation for new graduates is a mess. The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security said

6.1 million college and university students will graduate in the first half of the year. Add to this the 4 million college students still looking for jobs and opportunities evaporate. Many of them will never have a good opportunity to find work.

When Wang went home on New Year's Day, his parents told him they decided to send him abroad to study. His parents were planning to sell their home and move into a smaller one to earn money.

"At first, I was opposed to the idea. However, my parents insisted that study abroad is the best chance for my continued development in the current situation. Since I was their only son, they were willing to support me at any cost," Wang said.

After a few days, he agreed with his parents' suggestion and began preparing to study abroad.

Wang is not the only one who decided to escape from the current job-hunting pressures. Tang Na, English education major at Shanghai International Studies University, decided to marry her boyfriend instead of getting a job when she graduates in June.

"Many of my classmates, including myself, have found it harder than ever to find work this year, especially as a female college student," she said.

An interview from a few months ago still remains in her memory. Among 10 students who went for the interview, only two college boys were invited back for a second interview: no female student received such notice.

"I would rather get married than face this kind of fierce competition for a job," Tang said.

Tang said she noticed that many female students are more eager to find a successful mate than an ideal job.

An online survey by China Youth Daily and Sohu.com found that 80 percent of the 1,900 surveyed expressed their understanding about the phenomenon of marry-upon-graduation. Thirty percent of the surveyed students said under the current pressure, getting married after graduation would be a good choice.



Many parents of graduating students send their children to study abroad to escape from the current job market.



Facing an ever tougher employment situation this year, most graduating students feel great pressures and worry about their future.

CFP Photos



Seeking an ideal mate for marriage is another road many female graduates are pursuing.



"Tuition will be returned if a student can not find a job after training," this professional training institution's ad reads.

Short-term struggle for long-term career

However, Zhou Ying, a student in the same class as Tang Na did not agree with the results of the online survey.

After experiencing a series of failures during her job-hunting in the past few months, Zhou decided to take part in a vocational training class in a local professional education institution.

"During the interviews with some big companies, I found that with my current experience I had no advantages over any other applicant. I quit worrying about applying for jobs and started to build my professional skills," she said.

Zhou said many students in her professional training class are graduating students who share her experiences and feelings.

"Unlike regular college classes, all the courses of study offered by professional education institutions stress practical skills, which are quite useful for graduating students in their future work," Lu Xuebin, vice president of China HR.com, a job hunting Web site, said.

According to statistics from China HR.com, the number of graduating students who are willing to participate in professional training classes has increased 20 percent in the last September-December period, compared to the same period in previous years.

Lu said some graduating students decided to establish their own business after finishing their professional training.

Yang Yang, 26, an English major who graduated from Tianjin Foreign Studies University four years ago, said she has already become the successful boss of an English education institution.

Yang said although the job-

hunt situation for college students when she graduated four years ago was not as serious as present, she could not find her ideal job.

"Getting a job is not the only option for college students after graduation. I am so glad to see that more and more students realize this," she said.

She said that great difficulties are inevitable when founding a business. "For students planning to start a business, finding a suitable project is most important," she said.

More proactive, creative students needed

Faced with serious questions about how to escape the job hunt, some experts say now is the time for people who are creative or proactive to excel.

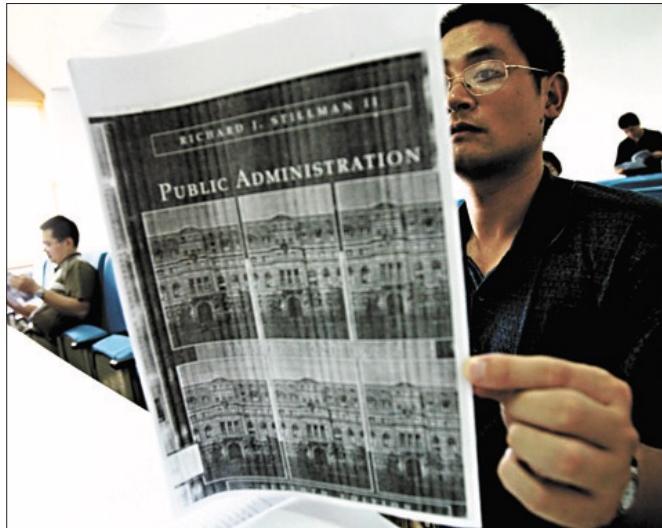
"Some negative actions, such as insisting on marrying rich people, reflect the rash and impetuous tendencies of current college students. That kind of thinking should not be advocated," said Zhou Shaoxian, a professor from the psychology consultation center of China Youth University for Political Sciences.

Talented college students should act with more creative thinking when planning their careers, such as improving practical skills and setting up a business by themselves," Zhou said.

A recent study conducted by the Shanghai labor bureau found that almost 60 percent of university graduates were interested in starting their own business, but 89 percent failed to do so.

"With a slew of initiatives to encourage graduates to set up their own business launched by the government this year, perhaps this year more students will be able to escape the job hunt," he said.

4,000 officials banned from overseas trips on public expenses



Local governments say the study tours abroad improve officials' administrative efficiency.

CFP Photo

(Bloomberg) – The country had banned almost 4,000 party and government officials from taking overseas trips on public expenses in the six months to the end of November, as part of a campaign started last year, Xinhua News Agency reported.

About 830,000 officials traveled abroad during the six months, down 18.9 percent from a year earlier, Xinhua cited Ma Wen, deputy secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the Communist Party of China, as saying.

"Since the campaign was launched last April, progress has been achieved in curbing overseas trips on public expense," Ma was quoted as saying. Anyone fabricating invitation letters to get approvals will face punishment, she said.

At the end of November, two officials in eastern Jiangxi Province were fired and another one got a disciplinary warning for joining a visit to the US and Canada on a public budget that was disguised as a study tour, Xinhua said.

Background

Why do officials want to study abroad?

By Huang Daochen

Tax reforms over the past few years have left local governments with less room to secure cash, but greedy officials have devised elaborate schemes to get around this. One favorite ploy is to set up an "overseas study tour" to disguise an all-expenses-paid holiday to popular resorts.

A senior official surnamed Yang with a Wenzhou, Zhejiang-based travel agency said government officials at different levels across the country, especially in developed cities in the east coast, are resorting to all sorts of tricks to disguise foreign holidays as "study trips."

Overseas study trips are just official junkets and some even manage to live it up in Las Vegas on public expense, Yang said.

Official travel is hugely profitable for travel agencies and therefore some collude with corrupt officials to arrange the trips, Yang said. While the average private citizen spends around 10,000 yuan for an overseas trip, the average bill for an official is 30,000 yuan.

Agencies often pad the bills by adding security costs, supposedly to ensure the safety of officials on their trips. And since officials

must always travel in comfort and style, luxury always comes before economy when booking flight tickets and hotels.

"There is fierce competition among agencies to get a slice of the pie," Yang said. An easier way for a travel agency to secure deals is to give kickbacks to the study groups.

Forged official invitation is another ploy, Yang said. For example, the up-market Silicon Valley town of Milpitas in California was one of the destinations the Wenzhou delegation traveled to, but the spokesman for the Milpitas Mayor's Office was quoted by reports as saying it had no record of any invitation.

And when there are invitations for overseas trips, Yang said officials contrive to spend as little time as possible on tedious official work. Instead, they make more time for relaxing and sightseeing. Las Vegas is a favorite destination because they can indulge their passion for gambling.

Yang said that Wenzhou's overseas study program costs about 100 million yuan a year. A recent CCTV documentary estimated that every year, 900 billion yuan of public money is spent on banquets, official cars and overseas study.

September 14 designated Netizen Day

The Internet Society of China (ISC) announced Monday that September 14 has been designated as the country's "Internet Users' Day." The date is the anniversary of the nation's first email in 1987 and was chosen by 500,000 online votes.

On September 14, 1987, China sent out its first email, "Across the Great Wall we can reach every corner of the world," unveiling the beginning of Chinese use of the Internet.

To unleash the creativity of netizens, the organizing committee of Netizen Day decided to let them choose the major elements of Internet User's Day, such as the date and logo. The voting process lasted over three months.

An earlier survey on qq.com showed that 66.8 percent of netizens wanted to have their own festival while 44 percent supported the choice of September 14 as Netizen Day. (Agencies)

Girl found dead in fridge

(BBC) – A man has been arrested after the body of a 4-year-old girl was found in a refrigerator in his flat in Guangzhou, local media reported.

The discovery was made after the man's neighbor – the girl's grandmother – spotted traces of blood outside his door, the *Guangzhou Daily* reported.

Liu Lingli went missing Friday, prompting a police search.

The newspaper quoted another resident of the southern city as saying the man had once described human flesh as "delicious."

The man, who was identified by his nickname A He, is said to be a migrant worker who is thought to be mentally ill.

He was described as a recluse who sometimes wore women's clothing and enjoyed watching war films.

Tycoon's wife detained in probe

(AP) – The wife of billionaire appliance retailer Huang Guanyu has been detained as police investigate Huang for possible financial offenses, according to news reports.

Du Juan, who resigned in December as a member of the board of directors of Huang's Gome retail chain, is under police guard in Beijing, the newspaper *Shanghai Securities News* and the magazine *Caijing* reported, citing unidentified sources.

Beijing police confirmed in a brief statement faxed to The Associated Press that Du is under investigation for possible "economic crimes" but did not say whether she was detained and gave no other details.

Du, 37, was returned to Beijing from an unidentified location outside the city before Christmas, *Caijing* reported. The *Shanghai Securities News* said police wanted to prevent her from leaving the country.

Gome says its operations have remained stable and that it did not expect the managerial changes to affect its business. Trading in the company's shares on the Hong Kong stock exchange has been suspended since November.

Olympic venue struck out by shopping mall

(Reuters) – Hopes that Beijing's Olympic baseball venue would be preserved for the future development of the sport in China have been dashed as the stadium's developer revealed it would be dismantled and replaced by a shopping mall.

The 15,000-seat Wuksong Sports Center baseball field, listed by Olympic organizers as a temporary venue even before the Games were held in August, had become the first venue slated for the wrecking ball, the *Beijing News* said on Monday.

"Our preliminary plan is to supply Beijing residents with a leisure center combined with shopping, culture, sports and entertainment," Guo Jinjiao, deputy manager of the development company, told the paper.

The 200-million-yuan stadium played host to a Major League Baseball (MLB) exhibition game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Diego Padres last March.

But apart from the MLB's rental fee for that game, it had not derived any income, the paper said.

"It could only be guaranteed if there were enough activities to attract people to the venue. We absolutely could not accept any suggestion of (keeping the field) to be used only once or twice a year," Guo said.

MLB officials had "many conversations" with Chinese Olympic and sport authorities and the developer to try to save the venue, Michael Marone, a Beijing-based MLB spokesman, told Reuters.

"Obviously it's a shame. You would prefer to have it kept as a relic of the Olympic Games and to help baseball culture to further develop here," Marone said.

An official with the Chinese Baseball League (CBL) said the league did not have the resources for the stadium's upkeep.

"We also wanted to save the venue but we are not the owners. It was a temporary facility," Chen Gang, a CBL official told Reuters.

China's national baseball team struggled against the world's big hitters at the Beijing Games, finishing eighth out of eight teams.

Baseball remains a fringe sport in China, and the six-team professional league set up in 2002 struggles to attract more than a few dozen spectators to regular matches.

The field's demise has nonetheless been greeted with dismay by local baseball fans.

"It is the best field in China, a place borne of the dreams of countless baseball fans and that has witnessed historic moments. It is already a Holy Land in our heart," said a post on the CBL Web site.



This venue will soon be replaced by a shopping mall.

IC Photo

Gov to bail out car industry

By Huang Daohen

The government will soon unveil a package of stimulus measures to support the domestic car industry, with an aim of ensuring 10 percent growth this year, the *Shanghai Securities Journal* reported, citing an unnamed official with the country's economic planner.

The move, considered part of a continuing effort to stimulate the economy, will reduce taxes on car purchases and encourage low-emission vehicles and self-owned brands, the report said.

The specific plan was submitted to the State Council for approval, the National Reform and Development Commission (NRDC), the nation's economic planning body, said in a recent statement.

Other policies include a reform on fuel tax, supporting the development of new energy vehicles and providing subsidies for carmakers.

Government bodies will be required to buy cars developed by domestic carmakers when making fleet purchases.

Experts said it was very rare for

the country to enact so many preferential policies for a single industry at once. "The release and implementation of the incentive plan will surely bring substantial benefits to local car makers, dealers and customers," Mao Youfeng, an expert from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, said.

Mao said the plan was not a temporary expedient to stimulate consumption. "With the measures, the government hopes to encourage carmakers to carry out energy conservation and green manufacturing to achieve sustainable development for the auto industry," Mao said.

However, Michael Hart, analyst with Jones Lang LaSalle, said he is cautious about prospects this year, predicting flat or slightly lower car sales at 6 million units.

China has 45 carmakers compared with 15 in the US, the world's largest car market. But after years of double-digit growth, domestic car sales slowed significantly especially in the second half of 2008 as a weakening economy curbed demand.

"US carmakers should not

Learn from US crisis by 'thinking small'

There is a lesson for domestic carmakers in the fate of the ailing US auto industry: develop smaller, fuel-efficient models instead of betting on gas-guzzlers, industry analysts have warned.

"We used to believe medium-sized cars would have the biggest market in China, but actually small cars have the greatest potential in terms of energy efficiency and price," senior engineer Chen Yilong of the Society of Automotive Engineers of China told Xinhua in December.

The US auto makers' plight stemmed from their decades-old love affair with big cars while Japanese carmakers gained a stronghold by appealing to America's fuel-conscious consumers, said independent auto analyst Jia Xinguang.

"US carmakers should not

have given up the market for small vehicles," said Jia, who urged Chinese auto makers to follow the path of Japan in terms of safe, fuel-saving technologies.

"The fall of the US car industry is not a recent thing; it has been going on since the 1970s, when crude oil prices almost tripled because of output cuts by major oil producers," Jia said.

During that crisis, Japan-based Toyota expanded its presence in the US with cheap, fuel-efficient cars. It now has surpassed most rivals with sales only second to General Motors in the US market.

In addition, while thinking small, Chen warned that domestic brands could be disadvantaged if the technology used in compact cars did not catch up with global rivals.

Deutsche's securities JV wins regulatory nod

The government approved Deutsche Bank's Chinese securities joint venture, making it the latest Western institution to gain access to the domestic capital market.

The company said Tuesday that the China Securities Regulatory Commission approved a proposed joint venture with Shanxi Securities, called Zhong De Securities.

Deutsche owns 33.3 percent of the venture, the maximum stake allowed for foreign securities firms in the country. The joint venture will focus on underwriting Chinese shares and debt.

The German financial giant joins UBS, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Credit Suisse among Western investment banks with a mainland Chinese joint venture.

Foreign banks are eager for a share of the business advising and underwriting domestic deals in China, but progress in winning access to the heavily regulated market has been slow.

Google wins lawsuit over Chinese name

Google, owner of the world's most-used Internet search engine, won a lawsuit over its subsidiary's name and trademark in Chinese, ending an 18-month dispute with a local company.

Google China will be paid 100,000 yuan in compensation from Beijing Gu Ge Science and Technology, according to a filing by the Beijing Haidian District Court Tuesday.

In 2006, Google named its unit in the country Gu Ge, which means "harvesting song" in Chinese. A year later, Beijing Gu Ge sued Google, claiming the Mountain View, California-based Internet company was using its name.

The court ruled that Beijing Gu Ge must stop using the name because it belongs to Google's China unit, according to the filing.

(Agencies)

British Airways funds migrant children in Beijing

By Li Jing

British Airways donated US \$350,000 from its Change for Good program to support children of migrant workers in Beijing.

The fund will aid UNICEF in organizing the vaccinations of 137,000 infant children in Chaoyang, Haidian and Daxing districts and to improve educational services for 12,000 primary school students in 15 schools over the next two years.

"It is difficult to be sure the program reaches the people that it intended to reach. With UNICEF, we can be sure that the delivery will be effective," Robert Webb, general counsel of British Airways, said.

Change for Good was first introduced to UNICEF China's projects in 1995 and has funded four projects to date, including the most recent.

It raised 250 million yuan since it was initiated 15 years ago. The fund is driven by donations from British Airways passengers.

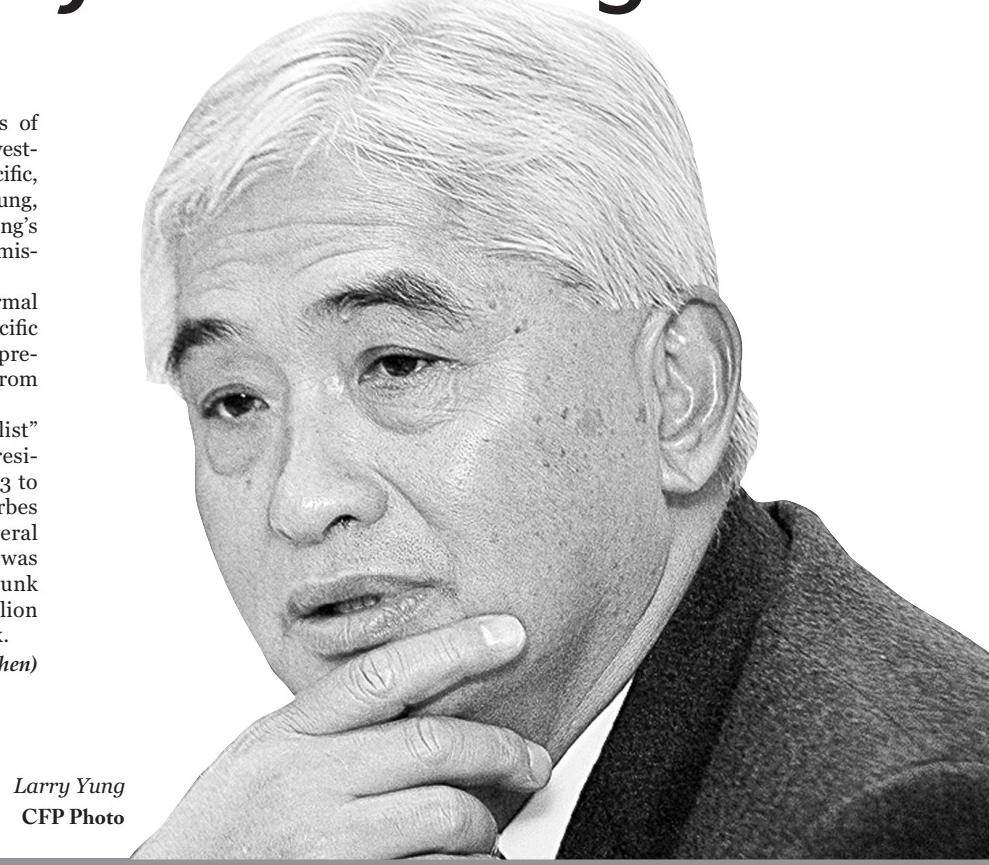
Another tycoon investigated

Seventeen board members of the state-owned overseas investment company CITIC Pacific, including its chairman Larry Yung, were questioned by Hong Kong's Securities and Futures Commission (SFC), the company said.

The SFC launched a formal investigation into CITIC Pacific last month after the company predicted a HK \$15.5 billion loss from its currency bets last year.

The son of "red Capitalist" Rong Yiren who was vice president of the country from 1993 to 1998, Yung has topped the Forbes list of the richest Chinese several times. His personal wealth was recently reported having shrunk by 70 percent from US \$3 billion (20.5 billion yuan) at its peak.

(By Huang Daohen)



Larry Yung
CFP Photo

Market watch

Online game revenue to hit US \$2.67 bln in 2010

a larger part of the business.

"Web games, due to their ease of play and method of access, have become popular among office workers and are considered to house great potential for in-game advertising due to the strong purchasing power of its user group," the report said.

Web game companies are attracting venture capital investment, and large Chinese portals such as Baidu have started to explore the Web game market.

On the mobile side, 2007 saw revenues generated by Java games hit 777 million yuan.

These mobile game sales are expected to maintain their high growth momentum and reach 1.29 billion yuan in 2008 and 3.16 billion yuan in 2010.

Although mobile phone use is widespread, those who actually play games online on their phones constitute "a very small proportion of handset users." Mobile online gaming generated revenues of just 120 million yuan in 2007, but the report said that 2008 was likely a turning point for the online mobile game market, in terms of rapid expansion, due to the upcoming launch of 3G

services in China.

Part of the growth of online gaming and mobile gaming has been fueled by an evolving demographic. The report said that there is an increasing number of female gamers and online gaming has become more widespread, no longer tied to urban residents.

There are currently around 120 gaming operators running approximately 200 online games in China. Shanda, Giant Interactive, NetEase and They are the top four online game operators in terms of revenues.

(By Huang Daohen)

Economist attacks nation's land preservation policy



By Huang Daochen

Economist Mao Yushi again came under fire at the end of 2008 after he attacked the nation's policy of retaining arable land as erroneous and harmful.

Speaking at a recent seminar in town, Mao said the government's rigid regulation of preserving at least 120 million hectares of arable land has become a hurdle to further industrialization and urbanization, Xinhua news agency reported.

The government set the bottom line in 2007 as a check against rampant encroachment upon farmland. The land preservation policy was once called by Land and Resources Minister Xu Shaoshi as the "high voltage red line" that no one could cross.

But Mao, 80, chairman of the Beijing-based think-tank Unirule Institute of Economics, believes it is no longer relevant to link food security with the nation's area of farmland.

He said that unlike five decades ago, China has already solved the grain production and distribution problem. He also said there is an abundant supply of food in the world market, so there was a near-zero possibility that starvation

would again hit the country.

Meanwhile, retaining at least 120 million hectares of farmland would delay necessary urbanization as more land is needed to accommodate farmers flooding into cities, Mao noted in a report on food security and arable land protection released by his think-tank.

"When hundreds of millions of farmers give up farming and flood into cities, you cannot keep the cities from expanding," he said.

The report, financed by the Ford Foundation, said the country's food supplies have increased 60 percent and its population 45 percent over the past 30 years. Available land for the population, on the other hand, is shrinking. This would also push up property prices, Mao said.

Most agriculture experts and netizens have spoken against Mao, citing the fact that China consumes 500 million tons of grain every year, twice the annual trade volume of crops worldwide.

Statistics from the Ministry of Land and Resources show that the total area of farmland reached 121.8 million hectares in 2007, and has declined at an average rate of 730,000 hectares per year over the past 11 years.

Expert view

Mao's remarks could not be more inopportune and they have generated an avalanche of criticism. The argument makes perfect economic sense but reflects political naivety. The plain fact is that the bottom line is not worked out through economic data, but through political and strategic considerations.

In times of emergency, regular imports and orderly international trade no longer

exist. The same kind of consideration may have dictated agricultural sectors becoming one of the most subsidized and protected areas in many developed countries.

Mao believes the much-diminished rural population can drastically boost productivity through land mergers and acquisitions and the use of modern farming methods. But China does not exist for the purpose of economic rationaliza-

tion alone. It must stand for its long-standing values, culture, tradition, sustainability and posterity.

And the cities, whose infrastructures are already overstrained, are clearly unprepared for peasants-turned-urbanites. By contrast, if the peasants could return to their land, they could at least wring enough from the land to feed themselves.

— Wan Lixin, commentator for the Shanghai Daily

Comment

Agree but no optimistic

I agree with Mao's ideals. Although their voices are not as loud, Mao has local supporters who believe that land marketization is the most efficient way to protect farmland. But I fail to see a practical way to transit the current land market to a free system in the short term.

— Shelley Wen, lawyer
First challenge to gov
Mao's talk marked the first

public challenge from a domestic scholar to the government's two-year-old arable land policy. I hope his voice could be heard by the government.

— Jeff Bass, expat teacher from US

Remember the pain

Born in 1929, Mao should be familiar with that painful experience five decades ago and understand the importance of food to Chinese people. Whoever went

through the famine in the late 1950s and early 1960s knows how important food is.

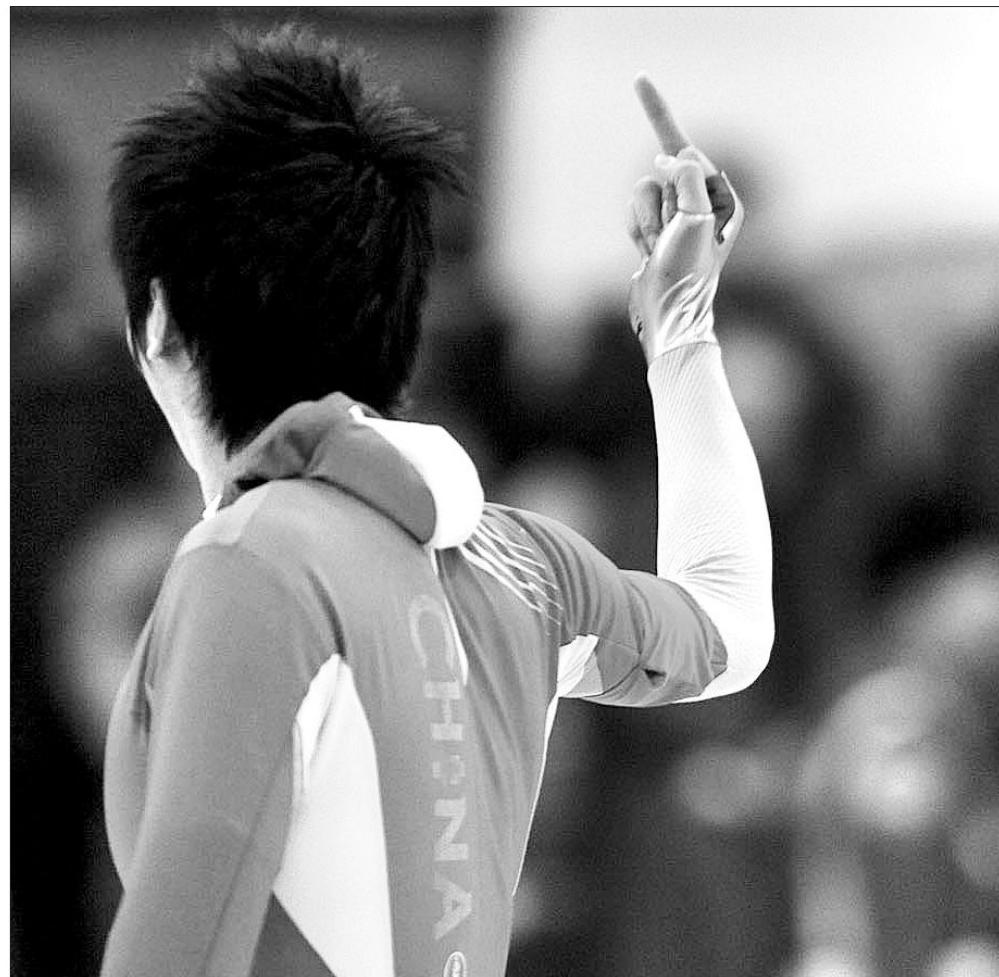
— Lao Jin, senior citizen in Beijing

Insane act

To care nothing about food safety and to push forward urbanization is the typical act of an insane guy who is not able to feed his starving belly but craves owning an iPhone.

— cava, netizen

One-finger salute emerging



A Chinese speed skater has been banned from national competition for a year after he gave a "one-fingered salute" to spectators who had jeered him.

Song Xingyu, 20, stuck his middle finger up at the crowd

after crossing the finish line of the 10,000-meter event at the National Games in northeast China over the weekend.

"I apologize to all the spectators. I shouldn't have made that gesture," Song said afterwards,

according to local media. Song's apology was not enough to save him from the wrath of the sports administrators. The Heilongjiang sports bureau banned him from training and competing for 12 months. IC Photo

Webcast of artificial insemination stirs public

By Venus Lee

A video of an artificial insemination procedure Webcast live by a health site has generated controversy, raising questions of a patient's right to privacy.

The video, which lasted 28 minutes and was shot by gxnettv.com, showed the surgery conducted at the Reproductive Medical and Genetic Center of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region People's Hospital. In it, a patient was lying on the operating table with her face turned away from the camera. The doctor then inserted into her uterus sperm taken from a separate room.

A medical expert and a studio anchor provided commentary throughout the program, giving information on semen and egg collection.

Although the surgery was short and simple, it created a huge stir online. Many netizens said the Web site and the hospital violated the patient's privacy in order to increase the site's hit rate.

Jin Xiumei, the gxnettv.com spokeswoman, defended the site. "We just wanted to demystify artificial insemination," she said. Although the public has heard many things about artificial insemination, few know how it is done and we wanted to provide knowledge, she said.

Jin said it took the Web site over a month to prepare the program, and that it had received written permission from the hospital and the patient prior to the Webcast. She said they did not in any way violate the patient's privacy.

Comment

A hygiene education program

It was a very good attempt. I learned about semen and egg collection and how artificial insemination is conducted. It was a vivid lesson. I think society is becoming more and more open. Such programs should become the norm, so there is no need to blame anyone.

— Hu Qiming, university student

New thoughts on childbearing

After seeing the video, I learned that artificial insemina-

tion is not painful. It also somewhat changed my notions about childbearing. I think that if I fail to find Mr. Right, I'll choose such a method to have a baby. Of course, I first need to find brilliant genes.

— Tian Wei, art editor

No respect for privacy

It felt so weird! How can the hospital and the Web site publicize such a private procedure? I guess they just wanted to attract viewers.

— Yang Jun, government worker



Lisa Ono will debut in Beijing this Saturday to celebrate bossa nova's 50th anniversary.

Photo provided by MS Company

Bossa nova ambassadress

By He Jianwei

"If people fall in love with bossa nova because of my music, I will feel very proud," Lisa Ono, a Japanese bossa nova singer, said. Little did Ono know that she has ignited the enthusiasm of locals for the Brazilian music.

Bossa nova, which first appeared half a century ago, evolved from samba but is harmonically more complex and is less percussive. To celebrate its 50th anniversary, Ono is holding her first concert in Beijing at the Olympic Sports Center Gymnasium on January 10.

Born in São Paulo, Brazil in 1962, Ono moved with her family to Tokyo at the age of 10. From that time on, she spent half of each year in Japan and half in Brazil. "In terms of music, I'm a Brazilian," she said.

She was influenced by her father, who owned a club in the South American country. Brazil is a multi-lingual country and Ono embraced its culture as a kid. "The passion of samba and the warmth of bossa nova entered my blood when I hung out at my father's club," she said.

Ono's father was also the agent

of Baden Powell de Aquino, a popular Brazilian guitarist. When her father got older, the family decided to move back to Japan, where he opened a Brazilian restaurant. Ono learned to play the guitar at age 13 and gravitated toward bossa nova music. She performed bossa nova and samba music at her father's restaurant.

It is interesting that Ono does not sing bossa nova in Japanese. "To respect the musical style of bossa nova, I've always sung in Portuguese, even from the very beginning," she said.

She had adamantly refused to sign a recording contract with any Japanese company. But finally, in 1989, MIDI released her first album *Catupiry*. She has since come out with an album each year, mostly in Portuguese, and has become Brazil's music ambassadress in Japan.

Now, Ono no longer refuses to sing in other languages. In her next album, she plans to do an English duet with a jazz singer. She hopes for an opportunity to sing in Japanese. "I believe that the most important element in music is not the language, but the sincerity from the singer's

heart," she said.

As one of bossa nova's pioneers, Ono collaborated in 1994 with Antonio Carlos Jobim, regarded as The Father of Bossa Nova. "I was so excited and nervous when I heard I would work with him. I'm a fan of his music," she said.

Their partnership resulted in "Estrada Branca," which tells the story of a man's last journey in life. A few months after its release, Jobim passed away. "It seemed like providence," Ono said.

Besides bossa nova and samba, Ono is influenced by other music styles such as pop, rock, Arabian folk music, French chansons, Italian ballads and Hawaiian music. She revived John Denver's "Take Me Home Country Road" and songs by the Beatles. But she interpreted all these songs in bossa nova style. "Bossa nova can make people relax amidst the business of life," she said.

In her Beijing concert, Ono will perform a song popularized by Teresa Teng, a pop singer ambassadress. "Her voice was soft and beautiful and I hope the audience can sing it with me," she said.

Korean artists aim to make a mark in Asian exhibition

By Zhang Dongya

A group of 80 artists from South Korea brought their works to the first Asian Art Top Show (AATS) that opened at the China World Trade Center on Monday. It was the biggest ever group of South Koreans to participate in a Chinese art exhibition, South Korean media reported. The event is expected to instill confidence in the Korean art market, and enhance artistic links between the two countries.

Jung Keunho, a South Korean artist who has lived in Beijing for 10 years, brought the group to town hoping that the exhibition would enable the Chinese people to better understand Korea.

An ancient fresco fan

Jung, born in 1969, became interested in Chinese Painting as a child. After finishing compulsory military service in South Korea, he headed straight to China in 1997 to study Chinese Painting at the China Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA). Seven years later, he finally earned his much-coveted master's degree.

Jung was infatuated with the Dunhuang frescoes, an artform found in western Gansu Province, and blended the style into his creations. All of Jung's works look like ancient frescoes, imbued with a strong sense of history. He prefers to work with minerals such as gold, silver, bronze and platinum

— materials which he said are not available in his country.

Cultural contacts and exchanges

When Jung heard about the AATS, he saw the exhibition as an ideal opportunity to introduce Korean art to the Chinese people.

"Though the China-ROK diplomatic relations have been in place for 16 years, I have to say the understanding between the people of the two countries is limited. What the Chinese people know about Korea just comes from the *Jewel in the Palace* TV series," Jung said.

The group of 80 Korean artists is made up of professors, associate professors and lecturers. They are mainly from three universities: Hongik University, Mokwon University and Konyang University.

Jung said CAFA is well-known in his country, but the Chinese people have never heard of its Korean counterpart, Hongik University.

"Communication at the top level of the two countries' artistic fields is rare. This time we invited college-based artists for two reasons: one, their distinguished artistic achievements; two, to enhance academic communication," said Wen Wenwu, a CAFA professor and curator of the art show.

Wen said that Korean art, in comparison with Chinese art, uses less rigid forms, such as paintings combined with installations.

"The interesting thing is you

will find ancient Chinese elements that have been lost or abandoned in the process of the country's economic development picked up and put to use by the Koreans. It is like a refrigerator of Chinese culture, reviving and refreshing things," he said.

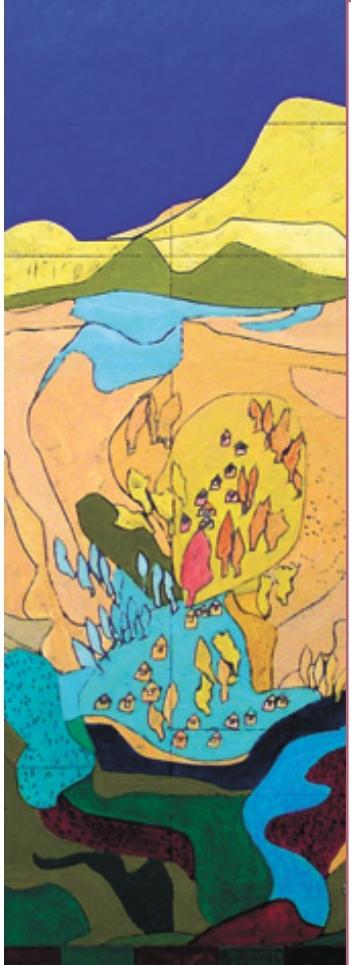
The art pieces of Park Hyun Hee from Mokwon University are done on Korean paper, considered to have been influenced by China's Xuan papermaking.

Restore confidence in China

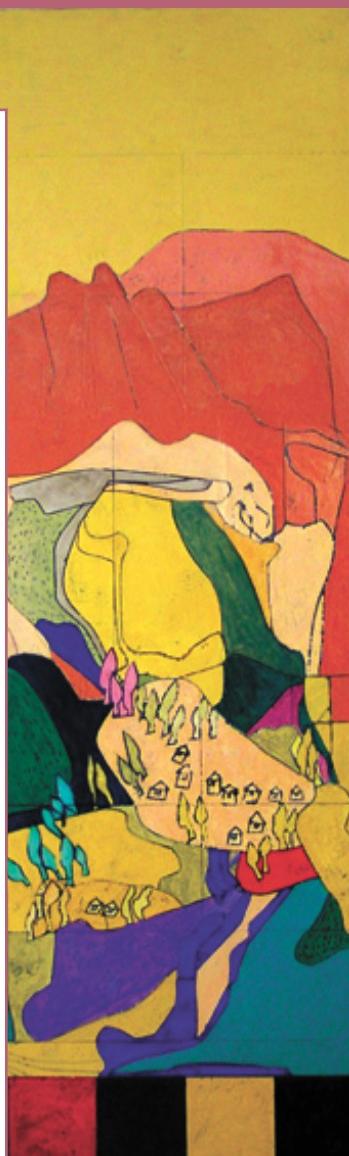
The Korean art market has been badly affected by the global financial crisis, especially with the sharp devaluation of the South Korea Won. Jung said more than a hundred artists had planned to join the AATS, but some backed out at the last minute because of funding problems.

Meanwhile, the artists who did make it expect much from the Chinese market. They also hope to establish an independent aesthetic and market system in Asia to bring their works to the mainstream, and to counter the negative effects of the financial crisis on the art market.

Business on the first day of the exhibit looked good. "Some people got a higher price than expected," Wen said. "I think most people's minds are in a panic, but the Korean artists will find this a rewarding trip."



"Inside Mind," by Lee Seungha
Photos provided by Asian Art Top Show



Negroponte comes for 30th anniversary of China-US relations

By Jackie Zhang

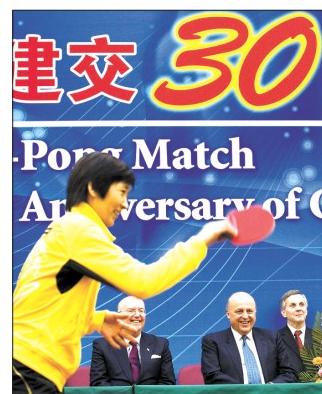
"Today, instead of living in isolation from each other, we are interdependent," John Negroponte, US deputy secretary of state, said yesterday at a media conference at the US Embassy in Beijing. "Our combined economic strength makes it essential that we work closely to meet the many international challenges that we face together in the 21st century."

Negroponte visited China instead of the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, who has been dealing with affairs related to the escalating tensions in the Middle East.

Negroponte began his two-day visit to the capital Wednesday to mark the 30th anniversary of the

establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US. "It is coincident that my visit in China this time is close to the end of the Bush's administration," he said. "From my personal point of view, it is a good opportunity for me to say thanks to my Chinese friends during this visit."

Negroponte's first visit to China was in June 1972 on a delegation led by Henry Kissinger at a time when the two countries had lived for more than two decades in political, economic and diplomatic isolation from each other. "The changes in our relationship since that time have been truly dramatic," the deputy secretary said. "Our two countries have interactions and exchanges across



John Negroponte (second from right) watches a commemorative table tennis match marking China's invitation of a US table team to visit in 1971, the historic "pingpong diplomacy."

the entire spectrum of human activity, on a scale and depth that simply could not have been imagined when we first established diplomatic ties in 1979."

He expressed confidence in the two countries' bilateral relations. He said one of the achievements of the Bush administration were strides made in US-China relations. "We've increased the levels of economic activities. It is very significant that China is now our third most important trading partner."

One issue that Negroponte highlighted in his speech was that "our two presidents have established very close personal relationships. They've met quite frequently ... and had telephone

contacts and other kinds of communication. For officials below the presidents, we have established solid mechanisms for dialogue. I hope that the dialogue mechanism will be continued by the new (US) government," he said.

Negroponte believes that China-US bilateral relations will focus on two main areas in the future: one, regional and global peace security; two, the international economic situation. "In the area of regional and global peace security, I think that the six-party talks are quite important. And the two countries will work hard in the year ahead to fulfill our commitment to the development of the international trading and economic system."

IC Photo

Thailand encourages visitors to return

By Han Manman

The Tourism Authority of Thailand is preparing proactive measures in China including four-month visa-free entry to draw back tourists.

Thailand, once a popular destination for Chinese travelers, has suffered its worst tourism slump in decades as a result of the global economic slowdown and domestic political turmoil.

In order to restore confidence and promote their country, Thai

tourism officials traveled to southern Guangdong Province last weekend. The officials signed a memorandum with several Guangdong travel agencies in an attempt to draw back as many visitors as possible.

"Our government has put in place improved security measures for visitors," Phornsiri Manoharn, the tourism authority's chief, said. "Regarding the New Year Eve's fire at a bar, the government will endorse new laws to ensure security."

In December, Bangkok's top

hotels were only 25 percent full — far from the usual 70 percent occupancy, Phornsiri said.

He said tourists will be exempt from paying visa fees for four months this year. Flight landing fees for visitors will also be cancelled, which means a considerable drop in travel expenses. The new measures are expected to be carried out later this month, he said.

Thai airlines and hotels have banded to initiate measures to lure more travelers. Local business operators

have also joined hands with the government to revive the depressed tourism industry, with many of them eyeing the Chinese market.

Chanin Donavanik, chief executive officer of Dusit International hotels, urged hotels and airlines to offer discounts. He also asked Airports of Thailand, operator of the country's international airports, to cut fees levied on airlines.

"Despite troubles in the past years, 2009 will be the worst for Thailand. We must revise mar-

keting strategies if the country wants to achieve its visitor target," Chanin said.

"Looking around, China and India are the most promising markets. All others are having major problems due to various factors," he said.

A six-day travel package to Thailand can go for as low as 1,700 yuan. Some routes have a 40-percent discount compared to a year ago. But for tourists, political stability is still the top concern.

2nd Edition

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BEIJING TODAY Editor: Han Manman Designer: Zhao Yan

Commerce & consultates

Shakespeare theater comes to town

By Gan Tian

Beijing Playhouse, the local Broadway theater, will stage Shakespeare's romantic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* this year and auditions will be held next month.

About 25 actors and singers are needed. Auditions will take place just after Valentine's Day, at 2 pm on February 15 and 7:30 pm on February 16. "What better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than auditioning for a romantic tragedy?" Chris Verrill, the president of Beijing Playhouse, said. The group said it loves discovering new talent.

Ability to perform in English is required; non-native speakers are welcome. The theater is looking for eight men ages 15 to 25; four women ages 15 to 25; seven women ages 25 to 80; seven men ages 25 to 80; and eight singers of all ages. Interested actors and singers need to complete the Actor and Singer Audition Form in advance.

Monologues are encouraged but not necessary. Actors will do a live read from the script of scenes from the play. Those who want to sing should bring their



Members of Beijing Playhouse staged A Christmas Carol in December

Photo provided by Beijing Playhouse

music. There will be call backs, if needed, on February 17 at 7:30 pm. Rehearsals are evenings at 6:30 pm in March and April.

Romeo and Juliet will go on stage from May 8 to June 7; Wednesday to Saturday nights and Sunday matinees.

For more information, please write to performance @ beijing-playhouse. com or visit their Web site beijingplayhouse. com.

New organic food store opens at Palm Spring

By Venus Lee

Organic Farm Food Hall opened its first store in the city at the Palm Spring Lifestyle Plaza near the south gate of Chaoyang Park yesterday.

The shop, a subsidiary of the Beijing Organic Farm Company, offers residents a broad assortment of items: bulk foods, vegetables, fruits, side dishes, gourmet cheeses, salads, gluten-free foods, baby foods, wines, cognacs, beers, fruit juices, household goods, natural cosmetics and pet products.

"All products in the store are free of pesticide, artificial fertilizers and any other contaminant from human or industrial waste. They are processed without ionizing radiation and food



The Organic Farm Store at Palm Spring Lifestyle Plaza

Photo by Venus Lee

additives," Chen Conghong, the company CEO, said.

Founded in 2000 as a home-delivery and mail-order organic food provider, the company has been working on improving the country's organic food supplies. It plans to open more stores in other Chinese metropolises.

"We have been serving nationwide supermarkets for nine years, but our stores will give customers direct service at a better price. We also have big ambitions to be a catalyst for the improvement of domestic organic produce and retail," Chen said.

Customers can visit the newly opened store and take advantage of a discount on some goods during the festival season.

Event

Friday Night Networking: Singapore Chamber of Commerce

In conjunction with the Overseas Singaporean Unit's Singapore Night, the Singapore Chamber of Commerce is holding its usual Friday evening networking at the Grand Millennium Hotel. Members will celebrate New Year's together, meet new friends and renew old ties, while the hotel will offer complimentary finger food and a 50-percent-discount on drinks.

When: January 9, 7-9 pm

Where: Havana Bar, Grand Millennium Hotel, Fortune Plaza, 7 Dongsanhuang Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8587 6888

Farmers' Wholesale Market and Flower Market Tour

The largest wholesale market in the city proper can now be found in a new building. But it will still be surrounded by an open-air market, reminiscent of old times.

When: January 10, 9 am - 1 pm

Where: China Culture Center, Kent Center, Anjialou, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Nuren Jie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6432 9341

Cooking Classes: Black Sesame Kitchen

The cooking class every Saturday focuses on a variety of themes, including Sichuan Cuisine, home-style food and hand-pulled noodles. The class includes a cooking demonstration, a hands-on session and plenty of tasting opportunities.

When: January 10, 1- 4 pm

Where: Black Sesame Kitchen, 3 Black Sesame Hutong, Dongcheng District

Tel: 13691474408

Cost: 300 yuan per person

Weekly Chinese Language Salon

The class discusses Zhong, Xiao and Yi - Loyalty, Filial Piety and Righteousness - what makes a perfect classical Chinese man.

When: January 10, 3-4:30 pm

Where: Treehouse Cafe, 81 Ju'er Hutong, Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6407 1665

(By Wei Ying)



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How to sue a nightmare landlord

By Annie Wei

Yongjin Guo, an expat consultant for the Beijing government's culture bureau, had a nightmare of a landlady.

Two years ago, Guo rented a one-bedroom apartment at Landmark Palace, a nice compound near Solana and Yansha shopping malls. In November, she had a telephone conversation with her landlady in which she said she wanted to extend the lease by a year, with the same terms and conditions. The woman agreed. According to the original contract, if Guo wanted to extend her lease, she should inform the owner a month before it expired on December 19, 2008.

To show she was sincere about the deal, Guo wired 10,000 yuan to the landlord's bank account on December 4 while she was in Hong Kong. She kept the bank transaction record.

The trouble began when she got back to town on December 16. Guo said she called her landlady on the same day, but could not reach her. In the succeeding days, she sent the woman text messages to arrange a time to sign the new contract after the old one expired. Her landlady agreed.

However, on December 22, the woman, along with three other family members, showed up at Guo's apartment. The landlady asked her to leave the place right away if she would not agree to the new monthly rent of 7,000 yuan, up from 5,000 yuan.

Guo called the police for help three times that day. But the police, including the property management, said the landlady had a right to be in the apartment since their contract expired three days before. The police also said that since the situation was a civil dispute and nobody had gotten injured, they could not get involved.

With the help of friends, Guo moved out on December 24 and got back her initial deposit of 5,000 yuan. But her landlady refused to return the 10,000 yuan she wired, claiming it was payment for money that Guo had borrowed.

"That is ridiculous," Guo said, "I never borrowed any money from them."

Guo thought of suing her landlady not just because of the money she lost, but because she felt cheated. She wondered, however, if a lawsuit was worth the extra time and energy.

In the eyes of the law

Wang Beijing, a lawyer from S&P Law Firm, helped a family from the US get back their US \$10,000 (68,400 yuan) lost in a rental scam during the Olympics. She said that although cases of expats suing their landlords are rare, a tenant should keep a file of all the paperwork just in case something ugly happens.

Guo's case is fairly simple, Wang said. The key to Guo's case is that the landlord had the right to increase the rent after the end of the contract; the tenant should submit a written request if she wants to keep the apartment. However, in this case, the tenant did not break the contract and the landlord had no right to take the 10,000 yuan.

"A proper lease is important," Wang said. Some tenants expect their apartment to have certain facilities, but if their conditions are not written down in the lease, it will be hard to argue their case in court.

The municipal government has already released a detailed lease template online (qmhouse.com.cn/news/zlht.doc). "It does not matter if it's written in English or Chinese, as long as it's standard. Make sure both parties agree on each article when they sign," Wang said.



Housing price and rent are reported to go down recently.
CFP Photo

Going to court

To get her money back, Guo can sue her landlady by filing a complaint at the People's Court in Chaoyang District, where her old apartment is located. Forms and samples are available at the court. She should prepare copies of relevant documents, hand them in with her statement, and wait for the hearing, Wang said.

Where: 2 Gongyuan Nan Li, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6502 1021

Hiring a lawyer

Wang said that if Guo wanted to save time and energy, she could hire a lawyer. The lawyer would represent her in court and she does not need to show up at all. The court charges 50 yuan to process a complaint, but lawyer's fees start at around 5,000 yuan. Smaller law firms might charge less.

ASK Beijing Today
Email your questions to:
weiyi@ynet.com

My husband and I bought an apartment in town in August 2007. After moving in, we discovered problems with the workmanship. We asked the real estate developer to fix them, but the company has kept delaying. We also asked the property management for help, but got no response. Can we refuse to pay the property management fee because of these unresolved issues?

Beijing Today consulted with a Chinese lawyer who said a real estate developer and a property manager are two entities that have entirely different relationships with a home owner. If your housing problem stems from the real estate developer, then the property manager has nothing to do with it and you cannot refuse to pay the *wuye* fee.

What's the best way to change yuan into US dollars? Which banks would you recommend?

Foreigners are allowed to buy up to US \$500 or its equivalent in one transaction, but need to present their passport. Chinese people can buy up to US \$5,000 or its equivalent per year free of charge. You can ask a Chinese friend for help if you need a large amount of foreign currency.

You can try the main branch of the Bank of China on the Second East Ring Road. On its 2nd floor is a counter for buying and selling foreign currency. You can also change money at the Bank of China desk at the Capital International Airport, near Gate 8, before you enter customs inspection. You will need to present your passport.

I have a dog that I'm bringing to Beijing from Canada. I'm wondering if I'm going to have a hard time finding an apartment that will allow me to keep a pet.

If you live in downtown Beijing, you will only be allowed to keep a small dog – that is, no higher than 35 centimeters. While some landlords do not have a problem with pets, some will not allow it. Make sure you register your dog with the local Public Security Bureau as soon as it gets here.

I just moved to Beijing and want to set up an Internet connection at home. Which companies do I go to for this?

It depends on where you live. For older buildings, an Internet connection can only be set up after a telephone line is installed. For this, you need to get in touch with the telephone company China Netcom at 10060. It will cost you 120 yuan per month for the first year, then 138 yuan for every succeeding month. You will need your landlord's help to apply for a telephone line since only the home owner can do this. Many newer buildings, on the other hand, have their own Internet network. Check with your apartment's management. There are other Internet providers, but have been reported to offer poorer service.

(By Wei Ying)

Olympic Homestay becomes Hutong Homestay

By Zhang Dongya

More than 40 families in Xicheng District called "Olympic Homestay" families have been renamed "Hutong Homestay" and continue to receive foreign guests. Meanwhile, new standards will be established to regulate the service.

About 600 households were carefully selected to host foreigners during the Olympic Games, more than 40 of them in Xicheng. Most of the families live in *siheyuan*, or courtyard residences typical of old Beijing. They were mainly situated around Shichahai, an area that attracted many foreign visitors.

"Hutong tours in the city were mainly around Shichahai. Olympic Homestay families continued serving tourists after the Games and we decided to rename them Hutong Homestay," Liu Jun, deputy director of the Xicheng District Tourism Bureau, said.

After the Games, some households maintained their contract with travel agencies to host guests. They followed the Olympic Homestay regulations, partly arranged by the district governors. "It needs unified standards to be competitive. We will also promote further cooperation with travel agencies," Liu said.

The standards will include three aspects: visit, lodging and catering. All participating households will be assessed based on their offered service and given licenses.

Households with a "visit license" can only



A courtyard homestay in Jiugulou Dajie during the Games joined Hutong Homestay.
CFP Photo

open their doors to sightseeing tours, and cannot provide lodging or catering. Lodging houses can have less than 15 beds, the industry standard, but they have to meet the same sanitary requirements as regular hotels.

Hutong Homestay will continue to offer visitors a chance to experience life with a Beijing family and create friendly exchanges. The program is still targeting foreign guests,

but is open to domestic tourists who are curious about life in a *siheyuan*.

Officials recommend rates of US\$60 to \$80 for a room per night, but said rates could be negotiated between visitors and hosts.

A lodging service Web site lodgingatbeijing.com continues to offer homestay service. Tourists can visit the site or call 6813 1374 to book rooms.



As real as im-

Monkey King acrobatics co-

The acrobatic drama *The Monkey King* was inspired by the Zhejiang Acrobatics General Troupe's trip to Japan eight years ago. The troupe was invited to participate in the production of a Hello Kitty acrobatic drama and help bring the characters "to life" with their superior skills.

Hello Kitty was one of the world's first acrobatic dramas, a new form of living theater that combines tumbling prowess with the traditional skills of drama. Wei Zhenbai, the head of the troupe, was impressed by the Hello Kitty production and began thinking of a way to similarly bring Chinese legends to life.

The presence of Sun Wukong in Japanese pop culture, known on the islands as Son Goku, made the character an obvious choice.

The troupe finished its script for *The Monkey King* in 2003. It was adapted from the episode of *Journey to the West* where the characters confront Madame White-bone, also known as the White-bone Demon. The story is rife with superhuman leaps and falls, and its action is considered some of the best in the book – which inherently makes it the hardest to adapt for stage.

Journey to the West follows monk Tang Song on his pilgrimage to retrieve Buddhist scriptures from India and bring them back to China. He and his three disciples face countless obstacles on their jour-

ney. Madame White-bone is a demon who has heard a rumor that anyone who eats Tang Song will become immortal, and she uses her black magic to ensnare the heroes.

During the battle, she transforms and summons many monsters to do her bidding. To pull off the scene takes more than superior kung fu – it takes magic.

Magic is the tougher of the two for Zhejiang's acrobats. To do the scene, they enlisted the aid of four stage magicians who have won multiple national contests. The regular acrobats in the troupe had to try and keep up.

During the play, Madame White-bone transforms into a beauty and Sun Wukong is beheaded. Feats once confined to the pages of the story or major film studios come alive on stage. Zhu Bajie, the pig, is stretched out and cut in half in a scene Wei said is sure to cause screams.

Zhejiang acrobats have a special affinity for the monkey king, and have played the role in many stage routines. The drama continues the tradition, and the monkey king is as real as ever. Acrobatics, dance, kung fu and opera

combine in each role.

The drama is told through action viewer regardless of language.

The costumes team's past experience in *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor*, ancient opera and acrobatics with modern

But despite the complex efforts behind the scenes, nothing profound or designed to change the world. The performance is "just for fun."

During its trial run in Hangzhou, 2008, the drama drew the attention of overseas producers. *The Monkey King* will go to the West for real, this month, performing in four European countries, the US and Canada.



The Monkey King blends with magic and acrobatics next month at the Poly Theater.

Photos provided by Poly Theater

Imagined

come to town

n, not words; it is accessible to any
ence includes the Hollywood movie
Emperor. The performance integrates
modern costumes and scenes.
behind the design, Wei said there is
challenge the audience's understanding.

Zhejiang Province, last May, it caught
After its Beijing Run, *The Monkey*
time bypassing India and heading for
Canada.

By Zheng Lu

The country's first large-scale magical acrobatics drama, *The Monkey King*, will be staged at the Poly Theater from February 4 to 13. Its magic and acrobatics blend modern elements with an ancient masterpiece.



Yesterday's books have advice for tomorrow



By Zhang Dongya

"History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme," Mark Twain said.

First published in 1937, Carl Crow's classic *400 Million Customers* (260pp, Earnshaw Books, 175 yuan) has found new relevance and received a reprinting in October by Earnshaw Books. The book is being hailed as a history lesson for tomorrow, but with the 400 million customers becoming 1 billion.

Crow (1884-1945), a Missouri-born boy, went to Shanghai in 1911 to work for China's first American-run English-language newspaper, the *China Press*. He used the money he earned on the paper to start his own advertising agency and became a wealthy businessman. He recorded his own business experiences and those of other foreign businessmen and Chinese customers over 25 years in Shanghai. The book contains fascinating anecdotes about the problems and pitfalls of foreign business.

While it has been reprinted many times over the last 60 years, it is now "more relevant than ever during today's recession."

"Carl was writing about how

to do business in China and about the habits of Chinese consumers, and his observations hold true today," Graham Earnshaw, 56, publisher of Earnshaw Books told *Beijing Today*. "It reflects just how cosmopolitan China was in the 1930s and 1940s, how similar it is today in terms of the mixture of international and Chinese culture."

The Earnshaw edition contains a new foreword by Carl Crow historian Paul French, who published a biography *A Tough Old China Hand* in 2006. The edition is part of a series of reprints on important China books published from the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

French, who runs a market research company in Shanghai, specializes in Chinese consumer habits. "We were looking at the strategies of Western companies in the China market and we couldn't help but remember how Carl Crow's [book] from 1937 showed many of the business problems and mistakes made by companies in the 1990s were repeats of mistakes they made in the 1930s!" he said.

During the research, French

found that the business community in China changed very little. Issues that confront and frustrate foreign businesses in China today – piracy, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) infringements, overestimations of the market – Crow's clients also faced in the 1930s.

Crow's book may help today's businessmen avoid the mistakes of their grandfathers.

The author delights in the foolishness and naivety of the Western businessman of his day. "In *400 Million Customers*, Carl is slightly coy about just how well he profited from his business," French said.

If you came to China thinking you could make a fortune, then Crow said chances are you would lose money, as many foreign businesses do today.

French said the author's most important advice was, "Do not waste your time trying to change China – it won't work. Let China change you, and perhaps then you'll find the right product for the Chinese consumer."



Photos provided by Earnshaw Books

Fiction writer turns to cookbook

By Annie Wei

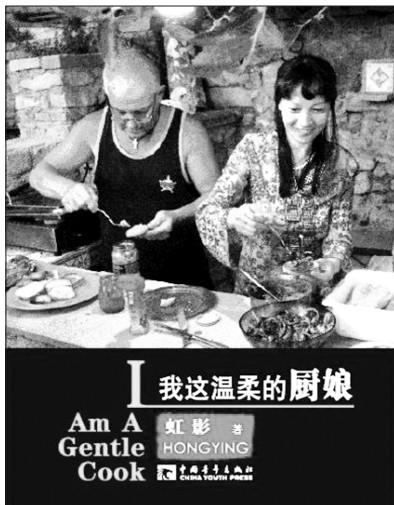
I Am A Gentle Cook (Wo Zhe Wenrou De Chunqiang, 224pp, China Youth Publishing House, 29 yuan) is unlike any other book Hong Ying has written.

As one of the top Chinese writers, Hong is known among her friends for her simple but creative dishes. This book is her first cookbook, documenting her gourmet tour around the world and her own dishes in words and photos.

The book has four sections. The first two are random pieces about food and her memories of cooking and her childhood; the third introduces countries she has been to where she had a good dining experience and the fourth is on her own food creations.

Hong said she developed her taste for cooking as a child. "When I was 12 or 13, my father could not see and my older sisters were working on the farm. I started cooking when I was only as tall as the stove. Women at that time tried their best to make delicious vegetables even they did not have good meat: cold dishes in summer and soup for winter. My father was from Zhejiang and Jiangsu Province and he was not used to spicy food, my mother was from Sichuan, so that was all she wanted. I had to cook both spicy and non-spicy dishes."

Many of her writer friends have written about her good cooking. She also hosts cooking programs on CCTV. Her friends



often ask if she was a born-cook or learned the craft. "I never gave up my imagination. I was born in a time when millions people suffered from hunger. My passion about food and love toward people make my heart soft when cooking," Hong said.

Hong said people who survive hunger have special feelings for good food. The experience of being hungry affected her whole life.

Born in Chongqing in 1962, Hong endured great poverty and hunger as a child. She grew up during the Great Famine and the Cultural Revolution. Her suffering affected more than her cooking, as illustrated in the autobiography *Daughter of Hunger*, titled *Daughter of the River* in its English translation. Her novels *K: The Art of Love and Summer of Betrayal* and *Daughter of Hunger* have been translated and published in 16 languages.

In this book, Hong describes her cooking as simple. She uses 92 characters to introduce how she prepares eggplants. She recommends rice congee with milk for stomach aches and chicken soup with bitter melon for the common cold.

"When I became a writer, my kitchen was as important as my bookroom," she said.

Bookworm book listing

Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.

Obama from Promise to Power

By David Mendell, 416pp, Harper, US \$7.99

Veteran *Chicago Tribune* journalist David Mendell has covered Obama since the beginning of the candidate's campaign for the Senate. In this book, the author offers a revealing, detailed portrait based on intensive research and exclusive interviews with the US president-elect's closest aides, mentors, political adversaries, and family—notably with his charismatic wife, Michelle. It is an eye-opening look at the evolution of a brilliant politician whose name has become a catchphrase for hope in a politically jaded society.

Two Kinds of Time

By Graham Peck, 725pp, University of Washington Press, US \$28.95

Graham Peck (1914-1968) made

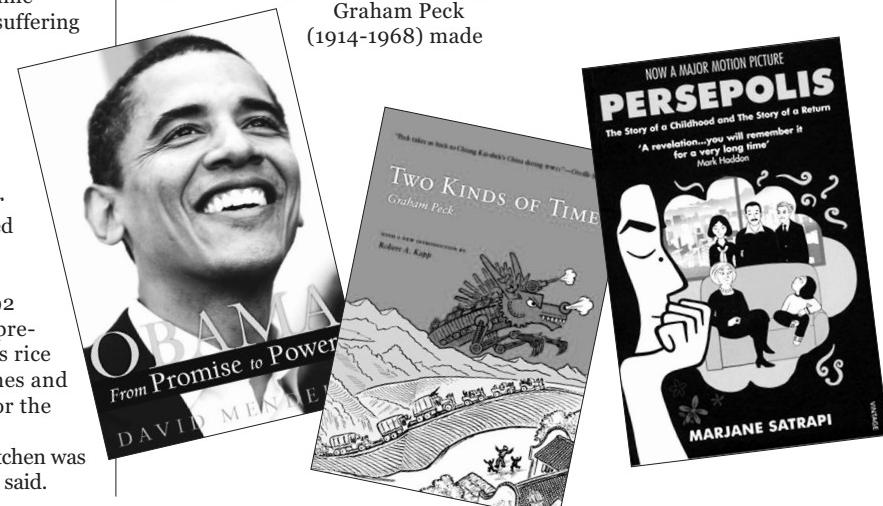
his first trip to China in 1935 and served with the US Office of War Information throughout the 1940s. This book is witty and eloquent in both its words and the drawings with which it is lovingly illustrated. Long out of print in its unabridged version, this engagingly written eye-witness narrative of the country on the eve of revolution remains an important source of historical and political information.

Persepolis

By Marjane Satrapi, 352pp, Vintage, US \$11.90

The book tells the story of Marjane Satrapi's life in Tehran from ages six to 14, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution and the devastating effects of war with Iraq.

(By He Jianwei)



Net films low on budget, high on quality

By He Jianwei

As video sharing Web sites grow increasingly popular, more users are sharing events in their daily lives. Initially, they posted short reality pieces. Gradually, some users have organized to film their own feature films on a shoestring budget. The best productions rival even major film companies.



Yu Zhenming invests 60,000 yuan to produce Hunhun (Rascal), which received 3 million clicks and 4,200 comments.



Youku, a major video sharing Web site, held a party in Shanghai themed YOU to celebrate China's grassroots video makers. The site gives users ages 20 to 40 a platform on which to communicate.

"The interactive elements of the Internet attract many users. More and more private studios and creative teams are bringing new ideas to show the energy and creativity of ordinary people," Wei Ming, the vice president of operations at Youku, said.

Making the news

Having uploaded 8,000 videos and attracted 220 million clicks, Dou Hongyu who posts under the handle Chiqing Mu'ou is one of the Web's most famous users.

Dou grew up in Tangshan, Hebei Province, in the 1970s and uses Sony T10, Samsung MX 10 and Nokia N70 video cameras. His subject matter is daily life.

Dou's first video was recorded on a train with his mobile phone. "It was midnight on the train and most people were sleepy. That's when the train guard used some humorous language to remind passengers not to forget about theft prevention."

The video sucked Dou into the world of video sharing. Now he always pays attention when he walks the street. "If I encounter something interesting or meaningful, I shoot on sight," he said.

As a beginner, he missed a lot of good opportunities. When he took a video of "A Drunken Beggar Dancing Disco," he dared not film the beggar directly. "I pretended to make a call, but actually the mobile phone was shooting. At first the beggar did not appear in my camera, so I changed direction. The beggar danced over three hours, so I stood on the street for three hours. It was a winter night and I was freezing," he said.

When he found the first two hours were unusable, he pointed the camera directly at the beggar. "He did not seem to care about my filming. Actu-

ally, he was even more energetic," he said.

The first time his videos found an audience were when he filmed slogans scrawled in Beijing's hutong. His "Most Interesting Slogans in Beijing's Siheyuan" made the front page of his host Web site. "When I was collecting video of the hutong, I found one slogan that read, 'I'll slash your tires if you park here,' written in chalk by a resident's door," he said.

After his video made the front page, Dou began to focus on social issues. "I hope more people can understand and see the world we live in," he said.



Dreams realized

Yu Zhenming, 35, is the manager of a Nanjing IT company by day. But at night, he dons the mantle of a comedy director.

He invested 60,000 yuan to produce his 128-minute film *Hunhun* (*Rascal*), which drew 3 million clicks and 4,200 comments.

Yu loves to watch movies in his spare time and hopes one day he can make a movie as well as his director idols Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige.

Last August, Yu found a script on a movie script Web site (juben.cn). That was when the idea to make a movie jumped into his head. "People

can make short videos by digital video, so why can't I make a film with the same technology?" he said.

The movie tells the story of a troublemaker who falls in love with a policewoman whose boyfriend is a drug dealer. A lady from the countryside helps him win the policewoman's heart, but falls in love with him herself. The climax of the movie has the troublemaker involved in a bad drug deal planned by the policewoman's boyfriend.

After it was uploaded, some netizens hailed it as "the best domestic movie in recent years."

His second movie *Bianxin* (*Change of Heart*) attracted many investors. It tells a story of a man who has a heart transplant and completely changes his temperament. "Four investors talked with me and they wanted to invest over 5 million to make this film," he said.

It was not easy for him to make the leap from grassroots to commercial production, but he admitted the experience of making an Internet movie has advantages the traditional industry cannot match.

"I found fame because of the Internet, and the Internet is my base. I will take the advantages of the Internet into consideration when I begin to promote my commercial movie. It is the difference between me and other commercial directors, such as Feng Xiaogang," he said.

Many graduates from film academies are trying to realize their dreams on video sharing

After the video was posted on the Web, others referenced it. It was the first time an ordinary person in China was able to cover a major media event with video. Since then, Zhima Paike has focused on hot issues like the Beijing Olympic Games.

He said a video sharing Web site's best spokesman is its users.

Photos provided by Youku.com



CFP Photo

Web sites. Dong Lei, the founder of IMOVI studio, is one of many beneficiaries.

Dong and his classmates from the Beijing Film Academy founded their studio in 2007 because the road to production allowed too few graduates.

"Without the Internet, making a movie would just be a dream," he said.

The low budget and easier access to an audience are two important reasons aspiring directors turn to the Internet to realize their dreams, he said.



Wanzipianhong Cream at Yong'anli Baihuo



Lost and found

A treasure trove of these products is Lost and Found, a shop in Guozijian near the Lama Temple. It is a furniture and home equipment store selling kitchenware, chairs and sofas, clothes, accessories, as well as imported stationery.

What has impressed shoppers is its wide collection of products dating back to the 1980s,

including sewing machines and lamps. An old porcelain enamel cup brings to mind an image of a young air force student in his dorm room: he has very short hair, wears military uniform every day and could only communicate with his girlfriend by writing letters.

A porcelain enamel cup, with

an illustration of Tiananmen Square, sells at 188 yuan. A shop staff, Ma Ying, said a customer once came in looking for that specific design. It took them a long time to locate it.

Some old products are remade by their designers. For example, water bottles with traditional patterns now come in three sizes and

use lighter material. Back in the 80s, every family in town relied on a hot water bottle for a cup of warm water in winter since there were no water heaters or hot water dispensers at the time.

Where: 42 Guozijian, Dongcheng District
Tel: 6401 1855
Web site: lost-and-found.cn

Yong'anli Baihuo

Where Lost and Found sells higher-end products, a 50-year-old department store in Xuanwu District sells cheaper things – but choices are limited.

The store was established in 1958 and has never changed its location, said Gao Shunshuai, a staff member who has been working there for 25 years.

Although it has suffered because of competition, it is still standing and has made a name for itself among shoppers of vintage Chinese goods.

This place recently began drawing in more customers, especially from 4 to 6 pm. Many customers travel a long way just to get their hand on memorabilia.

Zhang, 50, from Yayuncun in northern Beijing, was looking for a porcelain enamel bowl with a green line and yellow bottom. "That's what I used when I was a child," he said. Unfortunately, they were all sold out, shop assistants said.

Another female customer came for a brand of lotion pop-

ular when she was a girl, saying it reminded her of what her mother used. She decided to buy a few extras for her friends. "You cannot believe how cheap they are," she said.

Where: 143 Yong'anli, Xuanwu District
Tel: 6303 6566

Taobao

Let us get back to modern shopping paradise – online. Any vintage item customers can name is available on Taobao: a porcelain enamel salad bowl, tin toys, Yongjiu Bicycles or CJ750 sidecars.



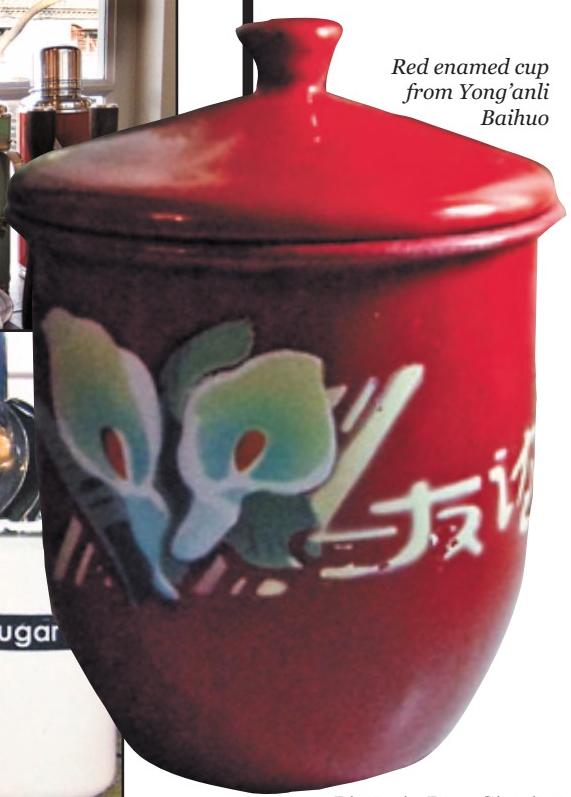
Imported Italian kitchen ware at Lost and Found



Hot water bottles at Yong'anli Baihuo



Cups at Lost and Found



Red enameled cup from Yong'anli Baihuo

Old is back and beautiful

By Annie Wei

Going after products made locally in the 1980s is a trend that has emerged among a small group of shoppers. The period from 1950 to 1980 is considered the "golden age" of original Chinese industrial design. Toys or daily necessities like vanity mirrors had distinguishing characteristics.

Although these things looked plain and boring when they first came out, they are now considered vintage. One or two pieces displayed at home will easily blend in with modern decor and give owners a piece of manufacturing history.



Duck toys at Lost and Found

Fan and clocks at Lost and Found

Good things to be found

Red enamel cup

Many Chinese people over the age of 50 still use these cups for their tea. Some use them when they brush their teeth or when they travel.

Location: Yong'anli Department Store

White porcelain enamel basic

It is all white with a blue line and costs 12 yuan.

Location: Yong'anli Department Store

Wanzipianhong cream

Although Chinese skincare products do not sound as sophisticated as international brands, this brand was very popular in the 80s. With its light texture, it works well as a hand cream and costs 15 yuan. What catches the eye of shoppers is its Anna Sui-like design.

Location: Yong'anli Department Store

Salad bowl

The older generation knows better about life: porcelain enamel can keep food better overnight. This bowl has a traditional design; it is not fancy, but it is practical. It is also big enough to make salad for a family of five and costs 20 yuan.

Location: Taobao

Other products are from Lost and Found, with prices starting at 48 yuan. Call the store for details.

A bigger world of beer

By Gan Tian

Most Chinese people only know Tsingtao and Yanjing beer. But there is a bigger world of beer out there, said Bob Pease, vice president at the Brewers Association of the US.



Beer tasting

Pease was hired as the operations director for the brewers association in 1993. At the end of last year, he was sent to Beijing and Shanghai to hold beer tasting seminars. The two-hour seminar recently held in town included a short history of US draft beer; how to store the beer as it is perishable; and the best glassware for beer. There was also a portion about how to pair food with different types of beer.

A long way to go

The US has a long history of beer brewing. Immigrants brought their native beer from Germany and the Czech Republic after 1840, opening the history of the country's beer industry. The types that emerged included Pilsner, bock, Kulmbacher, Weisse and Dunkel. These breweries grew from the 1870s to the early 1900s, but declined during World War I.

Large regional breweries were established between 1880 and 1919, including Schlitz, Pabst and Anheuser-Busch. They were highly industrialized, but later, half of them were consolidated and local beer manufacturing slowed down.

In 1933, "light beer" appeared, which had a weaker flavor and less alcohol content. At the beginning, there was only Pilsener on the market. But from 1975 onwards, the classics reappeared and experimentation began. The use of hops emerged, which gives beer its bitter taste, and the market focused on local ingredients and local tastes.

Pease said that in order to expand, the Chinese beer market must also go this way: establish smaller beer breweries that will add variety to the choices. "Chinese people just haven't tasted other beers except Tsingtao and Yanjing. If they do, they will love it," he said.

Beer and food

Here are a few tips to better enjoy a bottle of beer.

First, beer goes well with spicy foods. Why? The sweetness of malt is soothing, the drink's carbonation cleanses the palate and, of course, beer is thirst-quenching.

Second, it goes well with rich or fatty foods. Why? The carbonation cuts the oil, and hops can counteract food's richness and sweetness.

Third, it goes well with smoked, roasted and grilled foods. Why? Malt kilning creates flavors that are resonant with these flavors, and, most of these are also rich or fatty.

Finally, cheese and dessert can be enjoyed with beer.

Personal list

Pease has a personal list that says which beer goes well with which kind of food. This is only a small part of that list, but beer lovers would do well to take note.

American Pale Ale – mussels and frites

Barleywine – stilton

Belgian Dubbel – barbecued ribs

Brown Ale – smoked trout

ESB – simple goat cheese

Extra Special Bitter – fish and chips

Foreign Stout – well-aged cheddar

Hoppy Pilsner – triple-creme cheese

IPA – blue cheese

Maibock – lobster, roasted pork shank

Oktoberfest – chicken enchiladas

Pale Ale – grilled steak

Porter – roast pork loin

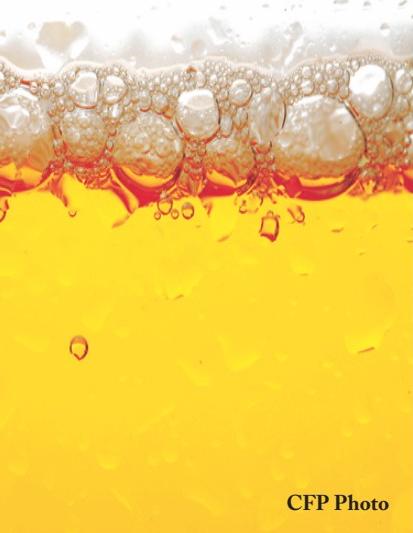
Rauchbier – black forest ham

Stout – oysters

Weizenbock – stinky washed-rind

Witbier – poached salmon

CFP Photo



Pixels go on frame

By Gan Tian

Pixel Fart, Yan Cong's solo exhibition, presents visitors art married with computer technology.

Many of Yan's works resemble children's book illustrations. But their nuances betray the skill of their creator in the form of eyelashes, the twinkle in an eye or the buttons on a flowery dress. Evil characters have bullhorns and good boys have rosy cheeks. Children are everywhere; some have the head of a pig, others the face of a dog, while there are those who literally tear their hearts out. The moon smiles down on all of this.



Yan's collection is small, but it is growing. Each artwork becomes a frame onto the artist's private mythological world. As it once did for him, Yan's work keeps us in a simpler world.

His artistic career began because of boredom and loneliness, while a student wasting away in his dorm room. He drew comics and

other illustrations and posted them on the Internet for a growing group of online friends. The imaginary landscapes he retreated into and the characters that inhabited them blended childhood nostalgia with the longing for a humble home in the countryside. His pen name, Yancong, is Chinese for "chimney."

His is a lonely world of folkloric creatures, whose dreamlike adventures unfold in a narrative voice culled over a lifetime of comic reading. Much of the detail, the compositional language and depth in his two-dimensional works were informed by his training as a landscape painter, although this formal instruction is otherwise invisible.

Yan put pixels on his works

5 Friday, January 9

Exhibition

2009 New Year Print Art Festival

Where: Amelie Art Gallery, (between Red Gate and White Space Gallery), 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 6, daily except Monday, 11 am - 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6530 7048

Silent Music Touching Soul – Chinese Abstract Art



Abstract art, regarded as an artistic revolution in the West, entered China in the 1980s. The exhibition presents the work of four Chinese abstract artists: Bo Yun, Mao Lizi, Cheng Xiangjun and Zhang Jianbo. Their pieces combine traditional philosophy with Western modernity.

Where: Dandeli Gallery, 3 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 10, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Tel: 67708966

Movie

Los lunes al sol (Mondays in the Sun)

Directed by Fernando Leon, this is one of the most successful and socially involved Spanish films. It stars Javier Bardem and centers around unemployment, broken dreams and social struggles.

Where: Instituto Cervantes in Beijing, A1 Gongti Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5879 9666

Nightlife

D.O.A.

Often referred to as the founders of hardcore punk, Vancouver-based D.O.A. comes to town on their 30th anniversary tour. The group will perform its classics alongside tunes off its new album *Northern Avenger*.

Where: Mao Live, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

6 Saturday, January 10

Exhibition

Chinese Fatties – Zhang Jianjun Solo Exhibition

In the series, all the "fatties" look the same and seem happy, an approach through which the artist shows that in this consumeristic age, people lose themselves in their search for endless comforts.

Where: Artist Village Gallery, North of Renzhuang Village, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District

When: Until January 31,



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Where: Dandeli Gallery, 3 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

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Tel: 67708966

Movie

Ghosting – Li Qing Solo Exhibition

The exhibition presents the painting series "Spot the Difference" and "Images of Mutual Undoing and Unity," as well as 30 films, installations and photographs that give viewers a deeper understanding of a new generation of Chinese artists who have tried to weave together concept and language.

Where: Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 18, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free



daily 8 am - midnight

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 6959 8343

Yi Yan Solo Exhibition

Where: Fafa Gallery, 4 Yuyang Lu, Houshayu, Shunyi District

When: Until January 31, daily 10:30 am - 8 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8430 2587

Movie

Along the railway

Where: 43C, Beijing Keiven Aviation Instrument Company, 43 Beisanhuan

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan

Tel: 6404 2711

Xilu, Haidian District

When: 2-5 pm

Admission: 10 yuan

Tel: 8211 5288

Nightlife

Black Cat Bone and Sand

Black Cat Bone and Sand, a foreign blues band, celebrates the New Year with their musical favorites.

Where: Yugong Yishan, 3 Zhangzhonglu, Xicheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan

Tel: 6404 2711

oyang District

When: 2-4 pm

Admission: 20-30 yuan

Tel: 6591 8189

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg

Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 10-20 yuan

Tel: 6553 2627

Nightlife

Wang Juan

Wang Juan is known as Beijing's long-standing queen of folk music.

Where: D22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Wudaokou, Haidian District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6265 3177

Upcoming

Dance
Beauty and the Beast
Who: Birmingham Royal Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 13-15, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

only because he preferred an eclectic mix of elementary materials: ballpoint pen, newspaper collage, low-tech digital illustration, even needlepoint. His choice of media reflects the longing for an uncomplicated world.

Pixel Fart – Yan Cong Solo Exhibition

When: Until 15 Feb
Where: Star Gallery, B10, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8456 0591
Web site: stargallery.cn

Stage in February

Concert

Choral Concert for the Chinese Lantern Festival

Who: Spring Choir of Beijing
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: February 8, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

The Romantic Melody

Who: China Film Symphony Orchestra
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: February 14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,711 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

Love in Spring

Who: Choir of the China National Symphony Orchestra
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Music Festival Opening Concert of the China Philharmonic Orchestra 2008-2009

Who: Conducted by Zhang Guoyong

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District
When: February 22, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-680 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

Dance

Gala Show

Who: The Little Birch Tree Song and Dance Troupe of Russia
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: January 29-February 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

Opera

Grand New Epic Peking Opera: Red Cliff

Who: Directed by Shi Hongtu
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District

When: February 5-10, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-600 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Beauty Xi Shi

Who: Wuxi Song and Dance Ensemble and Jiangsu Province's Ethnic Dance Ensemble
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District

When: February 12-14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

A Sigh of Love

Who: Shanghai Ballet Company
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District

When: February 18-20, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-500 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

White-haired Girl

Who: Shanghai Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District

When: February 21-22, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-500 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Li Jing)

7 Sunday, January 11

Exhibition
Ghosting – Li Qing Solo Exhibition

The exhibition presents the painting series "Spot the Difference" and "Images of Mutual Undoing and Unity," as well as 30 films, installations and photographs that give viewers a deeper understanding of a new generation of Chinese artists who have tried to weave together concept and language.

Where: Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 18, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6543 2086

New York Photographs 1983-1993 – Ai Weiwei Solo Exhibition

This exhibition presents the artist's unpublished photographs, chosen from a collection of over 10,000 photos that capture the history, culture and atmosphere of 1980s New York.

Where: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, 155 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 18, daily

except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm,

Admission: Free

Tel: 6432 2663 ext 8008

Movie

The Andromeda Strain

Where: 1905 Film Club, 23 Dongsanhuai Beilu, Cha-

oyang District

When: 2-4 pm

Admission: 20-30 yuan

Tel: 6591 8189

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg

Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 10-20 yuan

Tel: 6553 2627

Nightlife

Wang Juan

Wang Juan is known as Beijing's long-standing queen of folk music.

Where: D22, 2

Hangover pills nothing but placebo

By Venus Lee

New Year's celebration and alcoholic spirits go hand in hand. The celebrations also go hand in hand with an influx of patients hospitalized with liver and digestive disease.

Not that *Beijing Today* would suggest a connection!

Zhao Fei, 34, a manager in a foreign trade company, said he spent many nights on the town this season to enhance his relationship with potential clients – all of whom drank like a fish. Since he was still an amateur imbiber, it only took a few toasts before Zhao found himself in the hospital.

"I was found to have alcoholic hepatitis by the doctor. Still, I have to drink socially for my business. I am worried about my health, but it is really hard for me to refuse toasts on these important nights out," he said.

Drinking less is best

"Twenty percent of alcohol consumed is absorbed in the stomach, and the rest is broken down in the small intestine," Jia Jidong, the doctor at the liver disease division of Beijing Friendship Hospital, said.

As much as 98 percent of alcohol in body can be metabolized, and most of its energy will be utilized by the body. The rest goes to the kidneys and the lungs. Ordinarily, the body can metabolize alcohol at 10 milliliters per hour. From this perspective, the best therapy is to drink little and stretch out the time between drinks.

Jia said hangover pills are nothing but a placebo. But no matter how much the patient believes in them, they cannot relieve the harm heavy drinking causes to the liver, intestines and stomach. Many contain hidden dangers in the form of diuretics, stim-

ulants and hormones. These ingredients may create the illusion of sobriety, but the alcohol continues to work its magic.

"There are no effective drugs to alleviate inebriation. Drinking in moderation is the only way to avoid damaging your body. The best time to drink hard liquor is at lunch, and it's never good to drink on an empty stomach," he said.

Bogus hangover remedies

1. Strong tea: Most people think strong tea can relieve a hangover. This is entirely incorrect. After the alcohol enters the bloodstream, it is converted into acetaldehyde first and then into acetic acid in the liver. The theine inside the tea propels whatever does not break down directly into the kidneys, which is very bad. Theine also causes blood vessels to contract, which can aggravate the monkeys pounding drums inside your skull.

2. Coffee: Some people drink a cup of coffee when they wake up with a hangover, but this can aggravate the side effects. Alcohol would normally be quickly absorbed by the digestive system and zapped away from your stomach, liver, heart and brain by the bloodstream. However, caffeine, the main ingredient of coffee, accelerates the

metabolism and stimulates your central nerve system and muscles, which can cause a rapid jump in blood pressure.

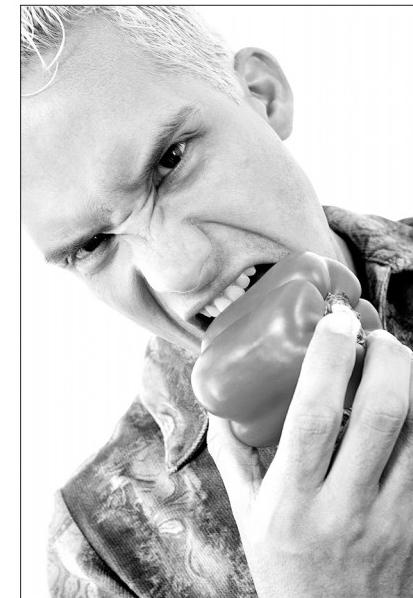
3. Hot bath: Circulation will already be high after a couple drinks, but the hot bath can add unnecessary pressure to the heart.

Real ways to get un-drunk:

1. Drink purified water: People usually end up with cottonmouth after heavy drinking. Too much alcohol upsets the balance of water in the body. By drinking more, you can change the density of alcohol in the blood and quickly eliminate it through your urine.
2. Eat fatty meat or drink milk before you start drinking to prevent alcohol from penetrating the walls of your stomach.
3. Drink 20-50 milliliters of mature vinegar diluted with water.
4. Eat some fruits and vegetables during your hangover.
5. Eat congee to warm your stomach.



CFP Photos



Fruit and salad aren't just for women

By Gan Tian

Women generally need more fruits and vegetables than men because their bodies contain more water. However, the Anderson Cancer Center at the University of Texas said in a report that men need more.

More than two-thirds of men are overweight or obese, and men have a higher mortality rate for certain diseases than women. The report says men have greater health risks than women for some diseases, and should eat nine servings of fruits and vegetables each day and women only seven servings per day.

For men, the risk of cardiovascular disease doubles, lung cancer triples and colorectal cancer doubles. Among people in the US, at least 58 million have some form of cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure, and 8.2 million men have a history of cancer. The report says fruits and vegetables can help with these conditions.

Fruits and vegetables contain many powerful and important nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, fiber and disease-fighting phytochemicals which reduce the risk of many cancers, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

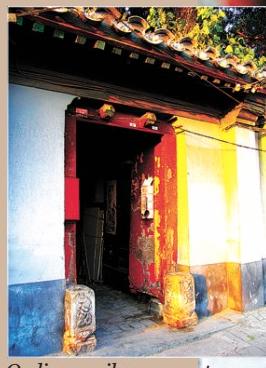
How much equals one serving? The Anderson Cancer Center said a cup of fruit juice, one medium banana, one cup of chopped or diced raw vegetables, one medium apple, a cup of cooked vegetables, a cup of dried fruit or a cup of cooked beans or peas.

Go and see your dietitian to check whether you have met the amount. One serving of fruit or vegetables should fit in the palm of your hand. It is smaller than most people think.

Some men always complain that they have no time for vegetables or fruits. Here are a couple of tips to help men increase their intake.

- Have fresh fruit in the morning
- Snack on fresh fruit throughout the day
- Eat a big salad at lunch
- Snack on raw vegetables with a healthy dip
- Eat at least two vegetables with dinner
- Add beans and peas to salads

Almost-forgotten Old Beijing art



Ordinary siheyuan entrances are usually guarded by mendun.



Mendun with complex and beautiful carvings



The mendun at the door of the Tongjiao Temple.

Meaning of mendun carvings

The stones were carved using a variety of sculpting skills, some in bold relief, some in bas-relief and others pierced. The craftsmanship of some of the bases shows the matchless skills of the artisans of the day.

As a reflection of the Chinese psyche, the people tried all means to decorate the exposed part of the stone base called *bao gu shi*, or the drum-embracing stone. Some of the stones are square and others are round

with carvings in vivid patterns. The stones are carved into a great variety of figures, animals, grass, flowers. Typically depicted are auspicious images from Chinese mythology: a unicorn lying under a pine tree, a rhinoceros looking up at the moon or a butterfly flying into a mountain.

The designs express the homeowners' good wishes for longevity, wealth, matrimonial harmony, a thriving family and to scare away evil



By Charles Zhu

Stone bases that support the pair of red-painted doors in front of a typical old Beijing home — the *siheyuan* or courtyard — were one of the most striking elements of local culture. Almost all these sculpted stones are gone, and what remains of these ancient pieces have practically been ignored.

Stone door base

The door stone base, or *mendun*, used to be an integral part of a courtyard's gate, the "face" to which Chinese people attached so much importance. An old Beijing folk song says, "The little boy sits crying on a mendun, wanting a wife." It carries much of the local humor about mendun.

The stone base made its earliest appearance in the Han Dynasty (206-220 BC) when siheyuan were first built. As time went on, people set greater store on the exposed part of the base and carved patterns.

The earliest discovery of such a stone was the one

unearthed from the tomb of the queen to Emperor Wen Cheng of the Northern Wei State (452-465 BC). The precious stone was carved in the shape of a tiger's head. After the year 1100, people gradually began making the stone bigger and etched with more complicated patterns. The stone base evolved into a purely decorative one, shaped like a box, positioned on a raised platform.

Somebody came up with the idea of putting a drum on the stone structure. When visitors arrived, the doorkeeper beat the drum to inform the master. As a drum on the stone base looked

spirits. As the pronunciation of "fish" is similar to that of "wealth," the artisans carved out fish among lotus flowers to mean "having wealth to spare every year".

There is also the carving of a girl, shown throwing coins away and playing with a three-foot frog. A frog, an animal that produces hundreds of eggs,

beautiful, artisans added a stone drum on the base, carved with lotus and propitious cloud patterns for purely ornamental purposes. Later, the design evolved into lotus leaves on water.

There are well over 10,000 mendun in the city. The decorative door stone base was first adopted in the Beijing area when the administrative prefecture of Jizhou was established. The art developed further as Beijing became the capital of the prefecture of Liao Zhong, and later, of the Yuan Dynasty. It reached its peak of popularity during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Remnants in Beijing

Though such carved stone door bases can no longer be found in Beijing, there are still traces of them. The pair of stone bases at the Platform for Imperial Memorial Services at Zhongshan Park is the oldest existing one. Some archaeologists say they were built during the Tang (618-907) and Sui (581-618) dynasties.

At the Five-pagoda Temple, there are still stones carved with flying animals dating back to the Tang Dynasty and stone tigers of the Liao (907-1125) and Jin (1115-1234) dynasties. Stone lions from the Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368) are kept at the White Pagoda Temple.

The Iron Lion Hutong dating back to the Yuan Dynasty, now called Zhanzizhong Lu, was noted for its iron lions. Stone door bases during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1616-1911) dynasties were mainly made of white marble.

One of the most outstanding stone door bases in Beijing is at the Tongjiao Temple in Dongzhimennei Dajie, which features a pattern of tigers flying on fiery wheels.

The craftsmanship of the longitudinal stone in cloud patterns at 47 Dajixiang in Xuanwu District is fairly unique. On the roadside of Qianqingchang in Xuanwu District, people will see a deserted stone of white marble.

Zhongshan Park

Take Subway Line 1 and get off at Tian'anmen Xi Station. Alternatively, visitors can take Buses 1, 4, or 802 and get off at Zhongshan Gongyuan Stop.

Zhangzizhong Lu

It is in Dongcheng District's Jiadaokou area. Buses 113, or 701 will take visitors there. Subway Line 5 also stops at Zhangzizhong Lu Station.

Tongjiao Temple

Take Buses 18, 24, 26 or 107 and get off at Xiaojie Stop. It is at 19 Zhenxian Hutong on Dongzhimen Nei.

Dajixiang Hutong

Take Buses 102, 105, 109, or 603 and get off at Guozixiang or Hufangqiao Lukou Xi Stop.

Shang'ertiao Hutong, Huashi

Take Buses 8, 684, 12, 25, 39 or 43 and get off at Huashi Lukou Nan or Huashi Lukou Bei Stop.

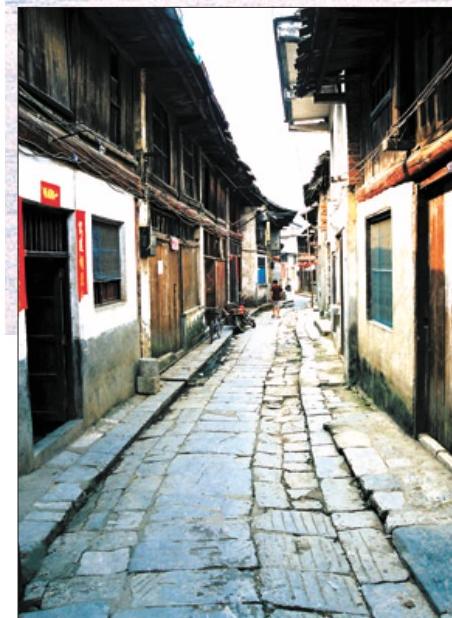


CFP Photos

Chibi — site of the Battle of Red Cliff

By Jackie Zhang

The Battle of Red Cliff is familiar to many in China, more so now that the second part of the movie *Red Cliff*, directed by John Woo, opened in cinemas nationwide yesterday. Although the film was shot at Yishui Lake in Hebei Province, the battle's real location was the City of Chibi, or Red Cliff, in Hubei Province.



Streets of green stones in Yangloudong

CFP Photo

Yangloudong and its tea heritage

In Chibi City, at the border of Hubei and Hunan, there is an 800-year-old town called Yangloudong. It used to be an important town in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, where people first planted and processed tea in Hubei Province.

The town that people see at present was constructed in 1626, in the Ming Dynasty. Yu, who visited Yangloudong, said its flagstone street was paved with green stones. The street was lined with buildings in Ming and Qing-style architecture; houses were built with green bricks and black tiles, or with wood and bamboo. Ruins of stone base columns sat in front of some old houses, telling their own story of the town.

"Old people told me that a deep imprint of a wheel could be seen on the stone road leading outside town. The print was made by a kind of single-wheel rick-

shaw which was used to transport tea in the Qing Dynasty," Yu said.

There are many "tea mountains" in Yangloudong, not a surprise given its history. From the town, visitors will see mountains of green tea fields, no matter which direction they are looking. Bamboo forests also flourish in the mountains. People residing in the mountains say they live on Nan Bamboo: they eat its fresh shoots in spring and sell the bamboo at favorable prices in autumn.

Guanyin Spring, in Songfeng Mountain to the east of the town, is a popular tourist spot. Because the spring water contains many minerals, locals use it in making brick tea. The locals make prickly ash tea only for their own consumption. "It tasted bitter at first, but when I swallowed it, I felt refreshed immediately," Yu said.

Commemoration of the battle

The Chibi battlefield, located 40 kilometers from downtown Chibi, is the only ancient battle site that has kept its original look. Traveling along the Yangtze River from the site, people can reach Sichuan Province, Wuhan, Suzhou and Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province. "When I arrived at the site, the wide water surface made me feel refreshed," Yu said.

When Cao's army was defeated, he fell back to the northern bank of the river. Liu and Sun won the battle, although they had a small number of soldiers, by setting fire to Cao's boats. The fire turned the cliffs at the river's southern bank red, thus the name "Red Cliff."

"The fire was extinguished, but the red cliffs along the Yangtze River still



Baifengtai

remain," Yu said. "Traces left by the battle, poems carved on stones in order to immortalize history took me back to ancient times. I felt really close to history."

Chibi's tourist area consists of three main mountains: Nanping, Jinluan and Chibi, on which the characters for its name are carved.

on top of Chibi Mountain, was constructed in 1936. Tales say it was where Zhou gave his army orders during the battle. Standing on the pavilion, people can see the river's opposite bank where Cao and his armies camped out.

Baifengtai, or Platform for Worshiping the Wind, is at the top of Nanping Mountain. It was where Zhuge Liang, Liu Bei's tactician and military counselor, set up a platform and asked for the wind's help in the battle plan to use fire.

On the right side of Baifengtai is the Chibi Stele Corridor. It has 25 steles containing well-known ancient poems celebrating the battle. The stone statue of General Zhou on Chibi Mountain is the largest human-figure stone statue in Hubei.

It is said that when the armies of Sun and Liu won the battle, Zhou Yu, the general, led soldiers in celebrating the victory. Zhou was so ecstatic he wrote *chi* and *bi* on the cliff. This is only a legend and the characters were actually written during Tang (618-907). Yijiang Pavilion, located

Getting to Chibi:

There are trains from Beijing to Chibi. The journey takes over 15 hours. Alternatively, visitors can fly to Wuhan from Beijing and then travel to Chibi by train. The trip from Wuhan to Chibi will not take more than two hours.



Encounter between warlords

The Battle of Red Cliff was a decisive battle at the end of the Han Dynasty (202-220 BC), prior to the period of the Three Kingdoms. It was fought in the winter of 208 AD between the allied forces of southern warlords Liu Bei and Sun Quan and the numerically superior forces of northern warlord Cao Cao. Liu and Sun successfully thwarted Cao's effort to conquer the land south of the Yangtze River and reunite the territory of the Eastern Han Dynasty. The allied victory at Red Cliff ensured the survival of Liu and Sun, gave them control of the Yangtze and provided a line of defense that became the basis for the creation of the two southern kingdoms of Shu Han and Eastern Wu. Details of the battle differ widely; in fact, even the exact location of battle is still fiercely debated. Although its precise location remains uncertain, the majority of academic assumptions place it on the south bank of the Yangtze River at some location southwest of present-day Wuhan, capital city of Hubei, and northeast of Baqiu, which refers to Yueyang City in Hunan. The most detailed account of the battle comes from the biography of Zhou Yu, an important general in the battle, in the 3rd-century historical text *Records of Three Kingdoms*.

Talk – The acronym that improves communication

By Mike Joseph

There is no doubt working in China creates unique management conditions.

One of my biggest challenges in 2008 was melding the abilities and personalities of over 80 staff from seven different nationalities, spread over eight offices in China. I certainly never experienced anything like this back in the UK, prior to leaving nine years ago. The key to this daunting task was to ensure communication.

While English is the “working” language within my company, Mandarin,



Mike Joseph has been in China for over nine years and is the ClarkMorgan National Corporate Training Manager. He specialises in communication skills.

Cantonese, Shanghainese and even French are mother-tongues of more than one staff member. A tyrannical approach would have been to make the company “English-only,” however, that would not necessarily encourage communication. So instead, we created TALK.

The acronym TALK stands for ‘Tell,’ ‘Ask,’ ‘Listen,’ and ‘Know,’ and has been invaluable in creating a culture of information sharing.

In relation to “tell,” all of my staff are required to use MSN Messenger, from the moment they arrive in the office in the morning, until the time they leave. Their identity must indicate their name, city location, and extension number. If they are out of the office, say, working at a client’s site, then their mobile phone number should be listed instead. If they are working on a project and need assistance they might include “Need trainer for negotiation skills in Chengdu” in their MSN login.

Finally, if staff are leaving the office to go on a client meeting, they must also tell the people around them where they are going. The language they choose is up to them, as long as they ‘Tell,’ and everyone understands.

“Ask” ensures that people can never use the excuse, “but nobody told me.” As there is no limit to the number of times you are able to ask, new staffs instantly feel protected, and forgetting is no longer a sin. The reply, “But I already told you”, is now a workplace faux pas.



CFP Photo

Why? Because of ‘Tell’!

The “Listen” component in TALK is vital, given the daily bombardment of distractions. Laptops are popular culprits, as they travel with us to meetings and their screens create walls between participants. Lowering the screen and keeping hands off the keyboard, when in discussions, ensures participants maintain eye contact. Active listening also

requires listeners to give acknowledgements of understanding, all while maintaining eye contact.

Such a simple concept has increased the communication within my company, and ensured that everyone ‘Knows’ what is happening in the company – the culmination of ‘Tell,’ ‘Ask,’ and ‘Listen.’ With TALK there is no excuse for ignorance based on a difference of native tongue.

Ski Resorts

Beijing Huabei International Ski Resort

Located at Jiugukou natural reserve in Huairou District, Beijing Huabei International Ski Resort has three cable lifts, six drag lifts, one magic carpet, one snow tubing run and seven ski runs for beginners through experts.

The resort uses a snow machine from Europe and its guidance systems meet European standards to ensure convenience and security.

Huabei is one of the largest outdoor sport and self-driving base camps in Beijing. It operates throughout the year and has skiing, ice climbing, rock climbing, field survival training, professional development training, orienteering, Great Wall crossing, paintball and fishing.

Where: 548 Hefangkou Cun, Huabei Zhen, Huairou District

Open: 8:30 am – 5:30 pm, 5:30-9:30 pm
Cost: 150 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 8969 6677
Web: hbski.com



Skiing is increasingly popular and many travelers are on the lookout for new resorts with competitive prices. Here is a directory of the top 10 ski resorts in Beijing.



Zhen, Shunyi District

Open: 8:30 am – 5 pm, 6-10 pm
Cost: 140 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6148 8111 or 6148 8222
Web: bjlhsski.com

Beijing Badaling Ski Resort

This resort is near the west end of the Badaling Great Wall. It is home to the capital’s longest motorcycle run and has two 800-meter-long primary runs, one 600-meter-long intermediate run, one 800-meter-long advanced run with a drop height of 160 meters and two flying disk runs. Immerse yourself in the beautiful scenery and entertainment like dog sleds, bungee jumping, snow saunas and DIY ice sculpture.

Where: 66 Badaling Development Zone, Badaling Zhen, Yanqing Country
Open: 8:30 am – 5 pm, 6-10 pm
Cost: 100 yuan two hours (weekend), 120 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6912 9922 or 9966
Web: bdlskiing.com

Beijing Shijingshong Ski Resort

Beijing Shijingshong Ski Resort is about 80 kilometers from Beijing and can accommodate 5,000 skiers. Its seven ski runs measure 5,000 meters. Experts can try the advanced run which has a vertical drop of 300 meters. The intermediates can try the 28-degree chute. The resort also offers great learning terrain and 5,000 sets of equipments. Meanwhile, the newly added Snow Board Paradise is available for boarding fans. A snow sauna and hot spring bath can help ease the day’s exhaustion.

Where: Zhongyangfang Cun, Zhangshanying Zhen, Yanqing Country
Open: 8 am – 5 pm
Cost: 120 yuan four hours (weekend), two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6919 9043

Web: sjljski.com

square meters artificial snow. All the primary, intermediate and advanced runs are more than 4,000 meters in total length. Two intermediate runs are nearly 1,000 meters with 20 kinds of different gradients; the advanced run has the relative drop height of 247 meters, length of 1,200 meters and the steepest gradient of 40 percent. Two elevated passenger ropeways, one ski carpet, eight surface lifts and 3,100 sets of importing ski appliances will fully ensure the loading capacity of 6,000 skiers per day.

Where: 588 Zhenshun Cun, Cuicun Zhen, Changping District

Open: 8am – 6pm, 5-10 pm
Cost: 150 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6072 5888
Web: bjski.com.cn

Beijing Lianhuashan Ski Resort

This ski resort is one of Beijing’s largest. It is 30 kilometers from the Capital International Airport and half a kilometer from the Liangshan stop of Bus 918 on the Shunping Highway. It has seven runs, five drag lifts and one glider cableway with a four-person chairlift.

Where: 288 Liangshan Dong Lu, Zhang

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.

The truth will come to light



CFP Photo

By Venus Lee

Zhao Jingyan, one of my college friends, phoned me last week and said she was stuck in a love triangle. And the worst thing, she said, was that she was pregnant and her baby's father is her graduate school mentor, who is married.

I could not imagine how Zhao got into this mess. She did very well in college. What's more, she was the most beautiful girl in our English department.

As graduation drew near, most of our classmates joined the hordes of students who went job hunting. Zhao did not worry about any of this because she was sure she would get admitted to graduate school based on her excellent grades.

She hoped to study under Zhang Hongsheng, one of the most talented professors in our school. He was also the most charming and was rumored to have been involved with his female students. Zhao turned a deaf ear to friends who pleaded for her to choose another mentor. Anyway, Professor Zhang soon accepted her application.

Zhao's nightmare began in the second year of her master's program. When she

submitted the first draft of her thesis paper, Zhang said it was seriously off-topic. This meant she was in danger of not graduating.

She got very upset and asked him what to do. The professor said he was busy in the daytime, but that he could go over her paper with her in his apartment at night. Although she felt uncomfortable, she still went to his luxurious apartment that evening, believing him to be a decent man.

When they were alone in his apartment – as his wife was overseas – Zhang said he had liked her from the first time he saw her. He said that as her mentor and lover, he would give her a good score on her thesis paper so she could graduate. She did not refuse his proposal. After that, he frequently asked her to stay over at his apartment.

She got an A in her thesis oral defense and was in the spotlight during the graduation ceremony. But gossip of her secret relations with Zhang quickly spread on campus.

That summer, Zhang found out his wife was returning from abroad and began pulling away from Zhao. He no longer returned her calls and seemed to be hiding from her. To make matters worse, she found out she

was two months pregnant. When she told him the news, he urged her to have an abortion immediately.

Meanwhile, Zhao's parents who had no idea what was going on, told her they were coming over from Shandong. She rang me to ask for help fabricating an excuse for them not to come. It was one of the most difficult tasks I had been given. I racked my brain for an answer, but came up with nothing.

During last week's New Year break, I asked my Canadian friend Frank for advice on behalf of Zhao. "Zhao is devastated. Once her parents find out she got pregnant by a married man, they will disown her," I said. "How can I help her? After all, paper cannot wrap fire..."

Frank interrupted me. "Excuse me, what do you mean by 'paper cannot wrap fire'? As far as I know, Chinese paper lanterns wrap around a flame. I think what you mean is 'truth will come to light sooner or later.' Isn't that right?"

"Yes!" I eagerly nodded, then sighed because I knew Frank would not be able to help Zhao any more than I could.

Blacklist

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a new column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch out for it each week.

Local professor: Zhu Shida

1. Three times than the registered adopted children

"Times" here means "multiplied by," so the phrase should be written this way: "three times the registered adopted children." Let us give more examples: The total area of that province is three times Belgium; The steel output last year was four times the output of 2000. In such cases of comparison, it is wrong to use the word "than."

2. The renting a courtyard is expensive.

The meaning of this sentence is confusing. What does the writer wish to say? After a careful study of it, it seems he forgot to add the word "of." The sentence should have said, The rental of a courtyard is expensive. But a better way to write the sentence would be, "To rent a courtyard is expensive."

Native speaker: Penny Turner

1. Three times than the registered adopted children

I would fix the sentence by dropping the word "than" and adding "number," so it is clear what the basis of comparison is. Thus, the new sentence would read, "three times the number of registered adopted children" or "the number is three times that of registered adopted children."

The word "than," however, may still be used for the same form of comparative sentence. In this case, it would be rewritten this way: "The number is three times higher than that of registered adopted children" or "It is three times higher than the number of registered adopted children."

2. The renting a courtyard is expensive.

Even on first reading, it is obvious what the writer wishes to say: Renting a courtyard is expensive. On top of Professor Zhu's suggestions, the sentence may also be rewritten this way: The courtyard rental is high/expensive.

Careful Landslip Attention Security

By Tiffany Tan

小心地滑 注意安全
Careful Landslip Attention Security



Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.

This is a sign capable of generating terror had it been outdoors, by a mountain, during a typhoon. Many a life have been taken by a landslip, also known as a landslide – the usually rapid downward movement of a mass of rock, earth or artificial fill on a slope.

Fortunately, this sign is in a building and at most, will generate confusion among English-speaking readers. What the Chinese characters actually mean is, "Be careful, slippery floor." If this were in the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people, there will be panic.

- Some of the Chinglish photos are from Chinglish.de.

Movie of the week

Miss Potter is an inspirational love story that follows Beatrix Potter's rise to being the most successful children's classics author of all time. Despite delighting generations of children with her books, Potter kept her own story locked carefully away. Her first book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, was a publishing phenomenon and led to a magical love affair with her publisher Norman Warne (Ewan McGregor).

Synopsis

Thirty years old and single, Beatrix Potter lives in London with her parents, social-climbers who are exasperated that she has turned down a number of eligible young men. Her only real friends are the animals which, since childhood, she has lovingly drawn and made stories about. She succeeds in selling a book of the stories, and it becomes Norman Warne's first project. He quickly falls in love with both the book and Potter and together they arrange its publication. This proves the first of many successes, offering her the possibility of escaping from both her parents' way of life and London.

**Scene 1**

(The publisher

Norman Warne pays a visit to Potter's house to discuss cooperation.)

Norman Warne (N): Miss Potter. I hope you will forgive my intrusion into your daily routine.

Potter (P): I was expecting one of the...

N: Ah, yes, I am Harold and Fruing's brother. I've recently joined the firm and they have done me the great honor of assigning your book to me. Thank you. It was most gracious of you to invite me to... (*Looking at the paintings*) Extraordinary! Funny! Delightful and magical and so beautifully drawn. I am utterly, utterly speechless.

P: Perhaps we should discuss our business, Mr. Warne.

W: I put your drawings aside with the greatest reluctance.

P: Your brother's letter makes two proposals which I find quite unacceptable. First, they'd like the drawings to be in color. I'm adamant (1) they be in black and white.

W: But Peter Rabbit's blue jacket and the red radishes, surely you would like your enchanting drawings reproduced as they are?

P: Well, of course I would prefer color, but color will make the book cost far more than little rabbits can afford. I'm adamant. Which brings us to your brother's second point; they wish to reduce the number of drawings by nearly a third. Totally unacceptable.

W: Let me explain. The idea of reducing the number of drawings was not my brother's but my own. If we can reduce the number to 31 precisely, then the illustrations for the entire book could be printed on a single sheet of paper using what we call the three-color process, that you desire, and at a relatively low level of cost. Yes? I've given your book a great deal of attention, truly. I would like it to look colorful on the shelf so that it stands out from (2) ordi-

nary books.

P: You have given it some thought. Which other books have you supervised, Mr. Warne?

W: Personally? This will be my first. Miss Potter, I have recently informed my brothers and my mother that I am no longer content to stay at home and play nursemaid solely because I am the youngest son. No. I would like a proper job, working for my family's firm and they have assigned me you. Does that make things clearer?

P: In other words, you have no experience whatsoever, but because you've made a nuisance (3) of yourself, demanding a chance, they've fobbed you off on (4) me.

W: Miss Potter, I know all too well what my brothers intended, giving me your, your 'bunny (5)' book, as they call it, but I find your book quite enchanting, delightful and if they intended to fob me off, as you say, then we shall show them. We shall give them a bunny book to conjure (6) with, in colors, mixed to your satisfaction in front of your very eyes at the printer.

P: At the printer? Oh, I could never.

W: I will escort you there myself, if you will allow me the honor.

P: Why would I never? Of course I'll go. I'm a grown woman. Miss Wiggin will be there. I see absolutely no reason why an artist shouldn't visit her printer.

W: Excellent, Miss Potter.

Scene 2

(Potter's mother wants her daughter to become a social butterfly instead of a writer.)

Mother (M): I think by Wednesday, you could hang the lace curtains upstairs. Then at least it will look like summer, even if it doesn't feel like it. Oh, Beatrix. What is this stain on your blouse? Jane says it won't wash out, and she's tried everything.

P: Oh, it's ink.

M: Ink?

P: I must have brushed against something at the

printers'. Jane, I'm very sorry for causing you extra work.

M: Jane, take the blouse away. Give it to the poor. This behavior shows scant (7) regard for your father's money.

P: Well, one day, I shall make enough money to buy my own clothes. I'm far too old to be living off the generosity of my father.

M: You're too old to be spending so much time in the company of a man who takes you to printers! Your father

does not approve, and neither do I.

P: Mr. Warne is publishing my book.

M: Oh, that book! I can hardly wait till it's finished and forgotten. I don't understand you, Beatrix. Your father and I have introduced you to so many suitable young men of your class, young men of fortune, and impeccably (8) good family.

P: Oh, certainly, like that charming fellow, Lionel Stokely?

Scene 3

(*Potter and Warne's sister Amelia are talking about marriage and men.*)

Amelia (A): When did you decide you wouldn't marry?

P: Just before my 20th birthday. Mother came to my room and announced that Lionel Stokely was to marry Gwendolyn Alcott and they were to live at Stokely Court, which Lionel had just inherited from the earl. And I knew right then that she would bring me no more suitors and that I would never marry. And that shocked me. But I felt relieved.

A: And that shocked me.

P: So I went into the garden and filled an entire notebook with sketches.

A: Men are bores. They're useful for only two things in life financial support and procreation.

P: Millie! You say outrageous (9) things!

A: Ah, but the price.

P: What price?

A: Domestic enslavement. Childbirth.

P: Terrifying.

A: No, unmarried women have a better life. I swear it's true. No houses, no babies, no husbands demanding things all the time, as long as one's lucky enough in life to have a good friend. I'm so glad Norman found you, Beatrix. I was missing something I didn't even know.

Scene 4

(*Potter's father finds his daughter has a flair for writing and is proud of her works.*)

P: How was your day at the club, Father?

F: Interesting, as always.

M: Rupert, we seem to have a situation.

We need your resolution.

P: I want to invite Norman Warne and his sister to our Christmas party.

M: With Lady Armitage? With Sir Nigel and Sybil? A tradesman, Rupert! How will anyone have fun?

P: He's the gentleman who publishes my books, Father.

M: Rupert.

F: I have something here, Beatrix. I went into Hatchards bookshop and I purchased this with good money. Hugh Whit-

Miss Potter

(2006)



teford bearded me in the club and rattled on (10) for hours. You know old Hugh, jowls all aflutter (11). Wife's bought three of your girls' books for her granddaughter's nursery. Sending more by ship to chums (12) in Bombay. Very soon, the whole club was telling me of some purchase that they had made of our daughter's creation. So I thought it was time that I bought one. So I went straight into Hatchards, put my shilling onto the counter.

P: I would have given you one.

F: But I wanted to buy one like everyone else. Now, I owe you an apology, Beatrix. When you showed me your books, all I saw was my little girl bringing me clever drawings for me to comment on. You're not a little girl anymore. You're an artist. The genuine article, I would have been proud to use that word about myself, and now, I'm proud of you, Beatrix.

P: Thank you, Father.

Vocabulary



1. Adamant: impervious to pleas, persuasion, requests, reason

2. Stands out from: here to be more attractive

3. Nuisance: a bothersome annoying person

4. Fob off on someone: deceive someone

5. Bunny: a young waitress in a night club whose costume includes the tail and ears of a rabbit.

6. Conjure: summon into action or bring into existence, often as if by magic

7. Scant: less than the correct or legal or full amount often deliberately so

8. Impeccably: flawlessly

9. Outrageous: grossly offensive to decency or morality causing horror

10. Rattle on: talk incessantly and tiresomely

11. Aflutter: excited in anticipation

12. Chums: a close friend who accompanies his buddies in their activities

(By Venus Lee)